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MEMOIRS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

CONTAINING,

I. A NARRATIVE OF THE ORGANIZATION AND OF THE EARLY MEASURES OF THE CHURCH.
II. ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS AND REMARKS.
III. AN APPENDIX OF ORIGINAL PAPERS.

BY WM. WHITE, D.D.

BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY S. POTTER & CO. NO. 55, CHESNUT ST.

J. MAXWELL, PRINTER.

1820.

BX 5880
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[illegible]

EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the 28th day of April, in the forty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1820, S. Potter, & Co., of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

" Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States of America. Containing, 1st. A Narrative of the Organization and of the early measures of the Church. 2dly. Additional statements and remarks. 3dly. An Appendix of Original Papers By Wm. White, D. D. Bishop of the Protestant church in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, " An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and also to the act entitled " An act supplementary to an act entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.

DAVID CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

DEDICATION.

TO THE

BISHOPS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

MY MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN,

THE motive to the prefixing of a dedication to these memoirs, is the opportunity thus afforded of testifying to the church at large, the harmony which has subsisted among us in our joint counsels for the conducting of our ecclesiastical concerns. If, at any time there has been a shade of difference of opinion, it has been overbalanced by the pleasure of mutual concession, and by the profit of amicable discussion.

All of you have been ordained to the Episcopacy by my hands. Submission of opinion on this account, is what I have never had the arrogancy to claim: but if any degree of personal respect should be supposed a natural consequence, I can thankfully acknowledge, that it has been bestowed.

Having lived in days in which there existed prejudices in our land against the name, and much

more against the office of a bishop; and when it was doubtful, whether any person in that character would be tolerated in the community; I now contemplate nine of our number, conducting the duties of their office without interruption; and in regard not to them only, but to ten of us who have gone to their rest, I trust the appeal may be made to the world, for their not being chargeable with causes of offence to our fellow Christians and our fellow citizens generally, or with the assuming of any powers within our communion, not confessedly recognised by our Ecclesiastical institutions.

Being your senior by many years, I enjoy satisfaction in the expectation of the good which you may be expected to be achieving, in what is now our common sphere of action, when I shall be removed from it: and, with my prayers for the success of your endeavours to this effect, I subscribe myself your affectionate brother,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

MANY years ago, the author of the following work began to commit to writing the most material facts which had occurred, relative to the church of which he is a minister: intending, in the event of the continuance of life and health, to carry on the recital. This was not with a view to early publication, because of the small extent of the sphere, in which the detail of very recent events was likely to interest curiosity. Accordingly, what was thus prepared laid unnoticed, until an application was made about twelve years ago, by the editor of the American edition of Dr. Rees's Cyclopedia, requesting attention to certain parts of that work, with a view to other objects. On this occasion it occurred, that there might be propriety and use in inserting, in a work of that kind, a brief account of what had been transacted during some years preceding, within the Episcopal church. For this reason, there was made a draft from the notes before taken, for the purpose stated. As what remained comprehended sundry matters, not of suf-

ficiently general concern for insertion in the Cyclopedia; it was afterwards reviewed under the impression that the time might come, when the former labour would not be unacceptable, within the communion for which it had been designed. In the present publication, the narrative has been continued to the present time. With it, there are given the matters kept back from the publication in the Cyclopedia; and a continuation of similar statements and remarks.

It has been occasionally suggested, from a knowledge of the materials in the hands of the author, and in consideration of the opportunities which he has possessed of personal observation of characters and of facts, that it would be better to embody the narrative with the remarks, and to make a history of the whole. The mere melting of them into one mass, after the separation of them as related above, did not seem likely to be fruitful of any considerable advantage: and as to the name of "a history," it would not only be disproportioned to the work, but perhaps pledge to an attempt, beyond what there are materials to accomplish. Of materials concerning the aggregate church, the author possesses all that are necessary, and more than will be here given; the view being confined to the more

important: but his collections in regard to the church in the different dioceses, are perhaps incomplete, although he is furnished with almost all their journals, and thinks himself well informed as to all the material events which have occurred, for half a century backward. Besides, there are a few points on which he wished to retain a liberty, that would be inconsistent with the fulness, and, considering what is to be expected in such a work, the fidelity of a history. One of these points is, that he chooses to be silent in regard to a few transactions, which, although sufficiently known and discoursed of when they happened, are not of so much importance to the future concerns of the church, as to induce a wish to perpetuate the remembrance of them; and thereby the personal irritation by which they were accompanied.

Besides these reasons, there is one arising from the desire of avoiding such a development of the characters of agents, as might induce the relating and the unintentional misstating of what may have passed in unguarded conversation. It is an unfair advantage taken of a deceased character, for an author to represent him as his own prejudices or his passions dictate; when, perhaps, the other party would have had the precaution to make his own story

known, had he foreseen such a result of the freedom of social intercourse.

Another license which has grown out of the adopted plan, is the anticipating of some circumstances which took place in England, during the intercourse with his grace the archbishop of Canterbury; when such anticipation might illustrate any matter previously under review. The motive, was the desire to record the said intercourse in the form in which it now appears, that is, in letters to the committee of the church in Pennsylvania: which, having been written when the matters related were fresh on the mind of the narrator, is the more likely to be a faithful exhibition of them. To have enlarged the letters, would have been incorrect; and yet, in what passed in the intercourse, there was such connexion with some points in an earlier part of the work, as was too material to be disregarded. Although there has not been an enlargement of the letters, nor an alteration of them in any instance, there have been attached to them a few notes, containing matters of less moment.

The motive of the author in the statements, is principally to record facts, which may otherwise be swept into oblivion by the lapse of time. For the mixing of his opinions with the facts, a reason may

be thought due. It is, that the habits of his life having exercised him much, on subjects which have bearings on the concerns of the church in doctrine, in discipline, and in worship; and his principles having been formed with deliberation and acted on with perseverance, not without prayer to the Father of lights for his holy guidance; there seems to him nothing unreasonable in the wish, to give the weight of long observation, to what are truth and order in his esteem. He has not the presumption to aspire to, nor the vanity to expect to share in the direction of the concerns of the church, after the very few years, in which there will be a possibility of his being present in her councils: but he commits his opinions, to the issue of what may be thought in reason due to them.

On the author's review of his statements and remarks, he had often a painful sensation at the frequent prominence in them of himself. In the way of apology, let it be remarked, 1st, that the apparent fault is in a great degree inseparable from the delivery of the results of personal observation; and 2dly, that he has had more agency than any other person, in the transactions recorded: owing to the circumstances in which he was placed; to a cause for which he cannot be sufficiently thankful, the con-

tinuance of his health and strength; and to his having attended every general convention, from the beginning to the present time. Under the weight of these considerations, he commits himself to the candour of the reader.

Of the papers in the Appendix, a great proportion are what may be read in the printed journals: but they were thought necessary to the series of the events presented. Those papers which were in the private possession of the author, and were designed to have an influence on the concerns of the church, he has thought it due to the object of this work, to perpetuate. The printing of any document which took the shape of a canon, has been judged unnecessary.

In regard to letters, let it be noticed, that there are none besides those, which like the papers above referred to, were designed to have public influence. In private letters, there is much to confirm the statements made, and to enlarge them, if that were the design.

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ERRATA.

Page 12. l. 13.	for Long	read Staten.
23, l. 7.	Maddison,	Madison.
52, l. 21.	Protestors,	Protesters.
121, l. from b. 6.	free,	few,
171, Note,	cession,	session.
184, l. from b. 5.	prevented,	prevent.
187, l. 12.	no,	not.
229, l. from b. 2.	worst,	worse.
290, l. from b. 6.	may life,	life may.
298, l. 12.	dele what.	
299, l. from b. 2.	their,	there.
307, l. 18.	those,	these.

The reference to the document respecting the court of Denmark, at the bottom of p. 61, should have been on p. 64, after line 14.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

1. A NARRATIVE OF THE ORGANIZATION

AND OF THE

EARLY MEASURES

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

A NARRATIVE, &c.

ALTHOUGH it happened, as might be expected, that a proportion of the settlers of English America were of the profession established in England; yet the number was not so considerable, as might be supposed from the existing relation; owing probably to the circumstance, that several of the colonies arose in a great measure from dissatisfaction with the establishment at home, and partly to an influx of subsequent settlers; not only from other countries, subject to the same crown, but also from countries on the continent of Europe; principally some of the states of Germany. In the northern and eastern states, the comparatively small number of the church of England may be seen in the fact, that when the revolutionary war began, there were not more than about eighty parochial clergymen of that church, to the northward and to the eastward of Maryland; and that those clergymen derived the greater part of their subsistence from the society instituted in England, for the propagation of the gospel in foreign

parts; with the exception of those resident in the towns of Boston and Newport, and the cities of New York and Philadelphia: there being no episcopal congregations out of those towns and cities, held to be of ability to support clergymen of themselves.* In Maryland and in Virginia, the episcopal church was much more numerous, and had legal establishments for its support. It was especially numerous in those parts of the said provinces, which were settled when the establishments took place; for in the more recently settled counties, the mass of the people were of other communions, scarcely known among them in the early period of their histories. In the more southern colonies, the episcopalians were fewer in proportion than in the two last mentioned; but more than in the northern.

It may be supposed, that, however comparatively few the original emigrants of the church of England in the northern and the middle colonies; yet they must have derived aid from the executive of the parent state, through the medium of its representatives, the governors. This was, indeed, the case in a degree; but the aid was inconsiderable and, confined to two or three of the earliest seats of population. Besides, it may well be doubted, whether, under the continually existing jealousy in the colonies of the parent power, there did not result some dis-

* The clergy in the province of Pennsylvania, exclusive of those in the city of Philadelphia, were never more than six in number; all of whom were missionaries, receiving salaries from England. The parochial clergy of the city were four.

advantage to a denomination comparatively small, from a community of profession: for this circumstance may have had a tendency to render the denomination unpopular among a great proportion of their fellow-citizens; especially under the apprehension that it might, at some future day, be an engine aiding in the introduction of a new system of colonial government.*

But even if the episcopal church found any source of increase in the connexion, this was more than counterbalanced by the peculiar circumstances under which it existed; which prevented and probably, under the old regime, would have continued to prevent its organization. Separated by the Atlantic ocean from the episcopacy under which it had been planted, it had no resource for a ministry, but in emigration from the mother country and by sending its candidates for the ministry, to that country for orders. The first, could not be the channel of a respectable permanent supply. And the second, which was the most depended on in the latter years of the colonies, was very troublesome and expensive. The evil of the want of an internal episcopacy, did not end here. For although the bishop of London was considered as the diocesan of the episcopal churches in America, it is evident, that his authority could not be effectually exerted, at such a distance for the

* Perhaps the only considerable endowment by the English government was of lands to Trinity church, New York. Its being considerable, is owing to its having become of great value by the increase of that city.

removing of unworthy clergymen: besides which, there were civil institutions supposed to be in opposition to it, in the provinces where establishments had been provided. In Maryland, in particular, all interference of the bishop of London, except in the single matter of ordination, was held by the proprietary government to be an encroachment on its authorities.*

For these reasons, and on the ground of the evident propriety of being supplied with all the orders of the ministry, recognized by their ecclesiastical system, application had been made to England at different times by the clergy, especially those in the northern colonies, for the obtaining of an episcopate. These applications had produced much contention in pamphlets and in newspapers; the writers on the episcopal side pleading the reasonableness of being

* The author, before his being in the ministry, knew a gentleman (the reverend Mr. Edminston) who, being in London for orders, had brought with him such recommendations to lord Baltimore, proprietary of Maryland, as induced the promise of an order to his governor, for any future parish that might be vacant. It was necessary after ordination, to show the testimonial of the transaction to the proprietary: who, perceiving with the instrument a license to preach in the province of Maryland, was much dissatisfied with the bishop of London on that account. The bishop usually gave such a license, according to the province for which the party was ordained: a practice, similar to what obtains in England. From this and from other circumstances, the conviction is felt, that his lordship would not have endured in his province any episcopal authority, distinct from his designation of the person. It is mentioned, as one of the difficulties attendant on the subject of an American episcopacy.

indulged in the full enjoyment of their religion; and their opponents objecting, that bishops, sent from England to America, would of course bring with them, or, if not, might be clothed by the paramount authority of Britain, with the powers of English bishops, to the great prejudice of people of other communions; and in contrariety to the principles on which the settlement of the colonies had taken place. What would have been the event, in this respect, had the episcopal clergy succeeded in their desires, is a problem, which it will be forever impossible to solve. In regard to the motives of the parties in the dispute, there are circumstances, which charity may apply to the most favourable interpretation. As the episcopal clergy disclaimed the designs and the expectations of which they were accused; and as the same was done by their advocates on the other side of the water, particularly by the principal of them, the great and good archbishop Secker; they ought to be supposed to have had in view an episcopacy purely religious. On the other hand, as their opponents laid aside their resistance of the religious part of it, as soon as American independence had done away all political danger, if it before existed; it ought to be believed, that in their former professed apprehensions, they were sincere. A.

If such was the difficulty of being supplied with a ministry, during the acknowledged supremacy of the British crown; much greater, as may be supposed, was the same difficulty, during the struggle which ended in the elevating of the colonies to the

rank of independent states. During that term, there was no resource for the supply of vacancies; which were continually multiplying, not only from death, but by the retreat of very many of the episcopal clergy to the mother country, and to the colonies still dependent on her. To add to the evil, many able and worthy ministers, cherishing their allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and entertaining conscientious scruples against the use of the liturgy, under the restriction of omitting the appointed prayers for him, ceased to officiate. Owing to these circumstances, the doors of the far greater number of the episcopal churches were closed for several years. In the state in which this work is edited, there was a part of that time, in which there was, through its whole extent, but one resident minister of the church in question, he who records the fact. B.

No sooner was it known in America, that Great Britain had acknowledged her independence, than a few young gentlemen to the southward, who had been educated for the ministry, but kept back from it by the times, embarked for England; and applied to the then bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, for orders. As the bishop could not ordain them, without requiring of them engagements inconsistent with their allegiance to the American sovereignty, he applied for and obtained an act of parliament, allowing him to dispense with requisitions of that sort. While this matter was depending, and the success of the candidates was doubtful, there was an incident, which

it may be proper to record, in justice to the intended good offices of a foreign sister church.

Mr. Adams, then the minister of the United States at the court of St. James, being in company with M. de St. Saphorin the minister of the crown of Denmark, mentioned to him the case here stated, of the candidates for orders; with a view to his opinion, whether they could be gratified in the kingdom which he represented. Sometime after, the Danish minister made a communication to the American; from which it appeared, that the inquiry of the latter had been notified to the Danish court; that the consequence had been a reference to the theological faculty of the kingdom; and that they had declared their readiness to ordain candidates from America, on the condition of their signing of the 39 Articles of the church of England, with the exception of the political parts of them; the service to be performed in Latin, in accommodation to the candidates, who might be supposed unacquainted with the language of the country. This conduct, is here the more cheerfully mentioned to the honour of the Danish church; as it is reasonable to presume, that there would have been an equal readiness to the consecrating of bishops, had necessity required a recourse for it to any other source than the English Episcopacy, under which the American churches had been planted. The proceeding in Denmark, was made known to the American government by Mr. Adams; a copy of whose letter to the president of congress, was sent to the author by the then supreme executive

council of Pennsylvania. Mr. Adams stated, that the transaction arose from his having been applied to by an American gentleman, in behalf of the candidates for ordination referred to. Mr. Adams mentioned the matter to M. de St. Saphorin, the Danish minister; who accordingly wrote to the count de Rosencrone, privy counsellor and secretary of state to the king of Denmark. The result was as above given.

In truth, there was no idea of having recourse, in the first instance, to any other quarter than that of the English Episcopacy, in the minds of those who had begun to direct their attention to the supply of the present and the future exigencies of the churches. But it seemed to those at least who took up the subject in the middle states, that nothing could be done to effect, without some association, under which the churches might act as a body: they having been heretofore detached from and independent on one another; excepting the bond of union which had subsisted through the medium of the bishop of London. That medium of connexion, had been confessedly destroyed by the revolution: and therefore it was evident, that without the creating of some new tie, the churches in the different states, and even those in the same state might adopt such varying measures, as would for ever prevent their being combined in one communion.

The first step towards the forming of a collective body of the episcopal church in the United States, was taken, at a meeting for another purpose, of a few clergymen of New York, New Jersey and

Pennsylvania, at Brunswick in New Jersey, on the 13th and 14th of May, 1784. These clergymen, in consequence of prior correspondence, had met for the purpose of consulting, in what way to renew a society that had existed under charters of incorporation from the governors of the said three states, for the support of widows and children of deceased clergymen. Here it was determined, to procure a larger meeting on the fifth of the ensuing October, in New York; not only for the purpose of reviving the said charitable institution, but to confer and agree on some general principles of an union of the Episcopal church throughout the states. C.

Such a meeting was held, at the time and place agreed on: and although the members composing it were not vested with powers, adequate to the present exigencies of the church; they happily and with great unanimity laid down a few general principles, to be recommended in the respective states, as the ground on which a future ecclesiastical government should be established. These principles were approbatory of Episcopacy and of the Book of Common Prayer; and provided for a representative body of the church, consisting of clergy and laity; who were to vote as distinct orders. There was also a recommendation to the church in the several states, to send clerical and lay deputies to a meeting to be held in Philadelphia, on the 27th of September in the following year. D.

Although at the meeting last held, there were present two clergymen from the eastern states; yet it

now appeared, that there was no probability, for the present, of the aid of the churches in those states, in the measures begun for the obtaining of a representative body of the church at large. From this they thought themselves restrained in Connecticut, in particular, by a step they had antecedently taken, for the obtaining of an Episcopate from England. For until the event of their application could be known, it naturally seemed to them inconsistent, to do any thing which might change the ground on which the gentleman of their choice was then standing. This gentleman was the Rev. Samuel Seabury, D. D. formerly missionary on Long Island; who had been recommended to England for consecration, before the evacuation of New York by the British army.

On the 27th of September, 1785, there assembled, agreeably to appointment, in Philadelphia, a convention of clerical and lay deputies, from seven of the thirteen United States, viz. from New York to Virginia, inclusive, with the addition of South Carolina. They applied themselves to the making of such alterations in the Book of Common Prayer, as were necessary for the accommodating of it to the late changes in the state; and the proposing, but not establishing, of such other alterations in that book and in the articles, as they thought an improvement of the service and of the manner of stating the principal articles of faith; these were published in a book, ever since known by the name of the proposed book. E.

The convention entered on the business of the Episcopacy, with the knowledge that there was now a bishop in Connecticut; consecrated, not in England, but by the non-juring bishops of Scotland. For Dr. Seabury, not meeting assurance of success with the bishops of the former country, had applied to the latter quarter for the succession, which had been there carefully maintained; notwithstanding their severance from the state, in the revolution of 1688. Bishop Seabury had returned to America; and had entered on the exercise of his new function, in the beginning of the preceding summer: and two or three gentlemen of the southern states had received ordination from his hands. Nevertheless, the members of this convention, although generally impressed with sentiments of respect towards the new bishop; and although, with the exception of a few, alleging nothing against the validity of his Episcopacy, thought it the most proper to direct their views in the first instance towards England. In this they were encouraged by information which they thought authentic, assigning for Dr. Seabury's failure these two reasons; that the administration had some apprehension of embroiling themselves with the American government, the sovereignty of which they had so recently acknowledged; and that the bishops were doubtful, how far the act of some clergymen, in their individual capacities, would be acquiesced in by their respective flocks. For the meeting of the former difficulty, it was thought easy to obtain, and there were afterwards obtained, from the executive authorities

of the states in which the new bishops were to reside, certificates, that what was sought did not interfere with any civil laws or constitutions. The latter difficulty was thought sufficiently obviated, by the powers under which the present convention was assembled.

Accordingly, they addressed the archbishops and bishops of England; stating, that the Episcopal church in the United States had been severed by a civil revolution, from the jurisdiction of the parent church in England; acknowledging the favours formerly received from the bishops of London in particular; and from the archbishops and bishops in general, through the medium of the society for propagating the gospel; declaring their desire to perpetuate among them the principles of the Church of England, in doctrine, discipline, and worship; and praying, that their lordships would consecrate to the Episcopacy, those persons who should be sent with that view, from the churches in any of the states respectively.

In order that the present convention might be succeeded by bodies of the like description, they framed an ecclesiastical constitution; the outlines of which were, that there should be a triennial convention, consisting of a deputation from the church in each state, of not more than four clergymen, and as many laymen; that they should vote statewise, each order to have a negative on the other; that when there should be a bishop in any state, he should be officially a member of the convention; that the different orders of clergy

should be accountable to the ecclesiastical authority, in the state only to which they should respectively belong; and that the engagement previous to ordination should be a declaration of belief in the holy Scriptures, and a promise of conformity to the doctrines and the worship of the church.

Further, the convention appointed a committee, with various powers; among which, was that of corresponding, during the recess, with the archbishops and bishops of England: and they adjourned, to meet again in Philadelphia, on the 20th of June, in the following year.

After the rising of the convention, their address to the English prelates was forwarded by the committee to his excellency John Adams, Esq., the American minister; with the request, that it might be delivered by him to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury. There were also forwarded certificates, from the executives of the states in which there was a probability of there being bishops chosen. The executives who gave these certificates were those of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. These evidences, agreeably to instructions of the convention, were applied for by the members of that body, from the said states respectively. Mr. Adams willingly performed the service solicited of him; and in a conversation which he held with the archbishop of Canterbury, on the subject of the address, gave such information, and expressed such sentiments, as were calculated to promote the object of it. F.

In the spring of the year 1786, the committee received an answer, signed by the two archbishops and eighteen of the twenty-four bishops of England; acknowledging the receipt of what they were pleased to call the christian and brotherly address of the convention; and declaring their wish to comply with the desire of it; but delaying measures to the effect, until there should be laid before them the alterations which had been made by the convention: it having been represented to the bishops, through private channels, that the alterations were essential deviations from the Church of England, either in doctrine or in discipline.

Not long after the receipt of this letter, the committee received another from the archbishops of Canterbury and York, to whom the management of the business had been left by their brethren, after a second meeting of the body; informing, that they had received the edited book of common prayer, in regard to which they declared, that besides their seeing of no occasion for some smaller alterations, which they do not specify; they are dissatisfied with the omission of the Nicene and the Athanasian creeds; and of the descent into hell in the Apostles' creed. And they further declare their disapprobation of an article in the proposed constitution, which seemed to them to subject the future bishops to a trial by the presbyters and the laymen, in the respective states. This, however, does not seem to have been the meaning of the article alluded to; which expresses no more, than that laws for the trial of bishops should be made, not by the general, but by each state ecclesiastical repre-

sentative. The prelates went on to inform the committee, that they were likely to obtain an act of parliament, enabling them to consecrate for America. They, however, expected, that before they should proceed under the act, satisfaction should be given in regard to the matters stated. The same communication laid down what would be required, in regard to the characters individually, who should be sent for consecration. As to faith, they were to make the subscription, which the American church had prescribed, to future candidates for orders. On the subject of learning, it was thought disrespectful to the persons to be sent, to subject them to an examination; it being at the same time trusted, that the American church would be aware of the disparagement of the episcopacy, which would be the result of its being conferred on persons not sufficiently respectble, in point of literary qualification. In order to give satisfaction in regard to the religious and moral character of each person to be sent, the archbishops required, that it should be testified by the convention chusing him; and in addition, that there should be a certificate from the general convention, to the effect that they knew no reason, why the person should not be consecrated to the episcopal office. These determinations are given as the result of a consultation of the two archbishops and fifteen of the bishops; being all who were at the time in town. Soon after the letter from the two archbishops, there came one from the archbishop of Canterbury alone, inclosing the act of parliament.

After the receipt of the first of the letters of the English prelates, and before the receipt of the second, the general convention assembled, agreeably to appointment, in Philadelphia, on the 20th of June, 1786. The principal business transacted by them, was another address to the English prelates; containing an acknowledgment of their friendly and affectionate letter; a declaration of not intending to depart from the doctrines of the English church; and a determination of making no further alterations, than such as either arose from a change of circumstances, or appeared conducive to union; and a repetition of the prayer for the succession. Before their adjournment, they appointed a committee, with power to reassemble them, if thought expedient, at Wilmington in the state of Delaware.

On the committee's receipt of the second letter, they summoned the convention to meet, at the place appointed, on the 10th of October following. The principal matter which occupied the body when assembled, was the question, how far they should accommodate to the requisitions of the English prelates.

The difficulty concerning the offensive article of the constitution had been done away, before the arrival of the objection of the archbishops. This objection, as already observed, was grounded on a misapprehension of the design of the article. But another objection had been made within the American church, on the score of there being no express provision for the presidency of a bishop in conven-

tions and in ecclesiastical trials. This objection had gained so much ground, that, in the session of June, it had been fully satisfied: which had more than done away the ground of the censure of the prelates. The omission of the Nicene creed had been generally regretted; and, accordingly, it was now, without debate or difficulty, restored to the book of Common Prayer; to stand after the Apostles' Creed, with permission of the use of either. The clause in the latter creed, of the descent into hell, occasioned considerable debate; but it was finally restored. The restoration of the Athanasian creed was negatived. The result of the deliberations of the convention, was addressed to the two archbishops, with thanks for their fatherly attention to the church; especially in procuring legal permission for the conveying of the succession.

The deputies from the several states were called on, beginning from the northward, for information, whether any persons had been chosen in them respectively, to proceed to England for consecration: when it appeared, that the Rev. Samuel Provoost, D. D. rector of Trinity church in the city of New York, had been chosen for that purpose by the convention in that state; that the Rev. William White, D. D. rector of Christ church and St. Peter's in the city of Philadelphia, had been chosen by the convention in Pennsylvania; and that the Rev. David Griffith, D. D. rector of Fairfax parish, Virginia, had been chosen by the convention there. Testimonials in their favour from the conventions in the respect-

ive states, agreeable to the form prescribed by the archbishops, were laid before the general convention; who immediately signed, in favour of each of the bishops elect, a testimonial according to the form prescribed to them by the same authority. G.

The two former of the above named clergymen, having embarked together early in the next month, arrived at Falmouth, after a passage of eighteen days. On their reaching of London, they were introduced to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, by his excellency Mr. Adams, who, in this particular, and in every instance in which his personal attentions could be either of use or an evidence of his respect and kindness, continued to manifest his concern for the interests of a church, of which he was not a member.

Before the accomplishing of the object of the voyage, there occurred the delay of a few weeks; owing to the archbishop's desire of previously laying before the bishops the grounds of his proceeding to the accomplishment of the business, in the early stages of which they had been consulted. The greater number of them were at their dioceses, but were expected to be in town at the ensuing opening of parliament; appointed for about the middle of January. Very soon afterwards, the fourth of February was appointed for the consecration.

On that day, and in the chapel of the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, Dr. White and Dr. Provoost were ordained and consecrated bishops, by the most reverend John Moore, archbishop of Canterbury. The

most reverend William Markham, archbishop of York, presented. And the bishops who joined with the two archbishops in the imposition of hands, were the right reverend Charles Moss, bishop of Bath and Wells; and the right reverend John Hinchliff, bishop of Peterborough. Before the end of the same month, the newly consecrated bishops sailed from Falmouth for New York; where they arrived on Easter Sunday, April the 7th, and soon afterwards began the exercise of the episcopacy in their respective dioceses. H.

On the 28th of July, 1789, there assembled the triennial convention; by whom the Episcopacy of bishops White and Provoost, of whom the former only was present, the latter being detained by sickness, was duly recognized. At this convention, there naturally occurred the importance of taking measures for the perpetuating of the succession: a matter, which some circumstances had subjected to considerable difficulty. The Rev. Dr. Griffith had been prevented by occurrences in his domestic situation, from prosecuting his intended voyage to England; and had given in his resignation to the convention in Virginia. In consequence of their direction, the resignation was notified to the general convention, on the first day of their entering on business. The doctor himself had come to attend it, as one of the deputies from Virginia; but his attendance was prevented by sickness, which ended in his dissolution, during the session. The subject of perpetuating the succession from England, with the relation which it bore to the question of

embracing that from the Scotch Episcopacy, was brought into view by a measure of the clergy in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. This body had elected the Rev. Edward Bass, rector of St. Paul's church in Newburyport, their bishop; and had addressed a letter to the bishops in Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania, praying them to unite in consecrating him. The last of these bishops, being the only one of them now present in convention, laid the letter addressed to him before the body, intimating his sincere wish, to join in such measures as they might adopt, for the forming of a permanent union with the churches in the eastern states; but at the same time expressing his doubt of its being consistent with the faith impliedly pledged to the English prelates, to proceed to any consecration, without first obtaining from them the number held in their church to be canonically necessary to such an act. This sentiment, which he also supposed to be entertained by the gentleman who had been consecrated with him, was duly respected by the body, while they manifested an earnest desire of the union alluded to; and, with a view to it, voted their opinion in favour of the validity of bishop Seabury's consecration; in which their president concurred.

In order to carry the sentiments of the convention into effect, they signified their request to the two bishops consecrated in England, that they would unite with bishop Seabury in the consecration of Mr. Bass: and they framed an address to the archbishops and bishops of England; requesting their approbation

of the measure, for the removing of any difficulty or delicacy, which might remain on the minds of the bishops whom they had already consecrated. And here it may be proper to record, that the difficulty was not long after removed in another way by the convention of Virginia in their electing of the Rev. James Maddison, D. D. president of William and Mary's college, Williamsburg, their bishop; and by his being consecrated in England.

At the present session of the general convention, the constitution formed in 1786 was reviewed and new modelled. The principal feature now given to it, was a distribution into two houses; one consisting of the bishops, and the other of the clerical and lay deputies, who must vote, when required by the clerical or by the lay representation from any state, as under the former constitution, by orders. The stated meetings, were to be on the second Tuesday in September in every third year; but intermediate meetings might be called by the bishops.

When the convention adjourned, it was to the 29th of September following: and before the adjournment, an invitation was given by them to bishop Seabury, and to their brethren generally in the eastern states, to be present at the proposed session; with a view to a permanent union.

On that day, the convention reassembled, when it appeared that bishop Seabury, with sundry of the clergy from Massachusetts and Connecticut, had accepted the invitation given them. There was laid before the convention, and by them ordered to be re-

corded, evidence of that bishop's consecration; which had been performed by bishops Kilgour, Petrie, and Skinner, of the non-juring church in Scotland. There then ensued a conference between a committee of the convention and the clergy from the eastern states; the result of which was, that, after one alteration of the constitution at their desire, they declared their acquiescence in it, and gave it their signatures accordingly.

It had been provided in the constitution, that the arrangement of two houses should take place, as soon as three bishops should belong to the body. This circumstance now occurred; although there were present only two of them, who accordingly formed the house of bishops.

The two houses entered on a review of the liturgy; the bishops originating alterations in some services, and the house of clerical and lay deputies proposing others. The result was the Book of Common Prayer, as it was then established and has been ever since used.

Some canons had been passed in the preceding session; but they were reconsidered and passed with sundry others, which continue to this day substantially the same; but with some alterations and additions by succeeding conventions. I.

The next triennial convention was held in the city of New York, in the autumn of 1792: at which were present the four bishops already mentioned to have been consecrated abroad. Hitherto, there had been no consecration in America: but at this con

vention, although nothing further was brought before them from Massachusetts, relative to Dr. Bass; the deputies from Maryland applied to the assembled bishops for the consecration of the Rev. Thomas John Claggett, D. D. who had been elected bishop by the convention of that state. Dr. Claggett was accordingly consecrated, during the session of the convention, in Trinity church, of the city in which they were assembled.*

The bishops, having reviewed the ordinal of the church of England, proposed a few alterations in it to the house of clerical and lay deputies; principally such as were necessary for the accommodating of it to local circumstances. The ordinal, thus reviewed, is now the established form for the consecrating of bishops and the ordaining of priests and deacons. K.

In September 1795, there was held another triennial convention, in the city of Philadelphia; at which were present all the bishops, except bishop Seabury. Besides other matters acted on, some canons were made; and a service was ordered for the consecrating of a church or chapel. It is substantially the same with a service composed by bishop Andrews, in the reign of James the First; and since commonly used by the English bishops in such consecrations; but without the authority of convocation or of parliament. During the session, there took place the consecration of the Rev. Robert Smith, D. D. rector

* Dr. Claggett was consecrated by bishop Provoost, who presided at this convention, assisted by bishops Seabury, White and Madison.

of St. Philip's, in Charleston, South Carolina; who had been elected by the convention in that state, their bishop.* L.

Between this and the next convention, there was consecrated the Rev. Edward Bass; again recommended from Massachusetts and New Hampshire: the certificate usually given on such occasions by the general convention, being in this instance given by a standing committee of that body; agreeably to a provision which had been made to that effect.†

And on the 18th of October of the same year, there was consecrated, in Trinity church in the city of Newhaven, the Rev. Abraham Jarvis, D. D., for the state of Connecticut.‡

There would have been a convention in Philadelphia, in September 1798: but the prevalence of epidemical disease preventing their assembling, the bishops, agreeably to a power vested in them when desired by a standing committee of the convention, summoned that body to meet, in the same city, on the 11th of June, 1799. On this occasion, the review of the articles was moved in the house of clerical and lay deputies. And a committee was appointed, who drew up a body of articles; which were not acted on, but ordered to be printed on the Journal,

* The consecration of Dr. Smith was by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Provoost, Madison and Claggett.

† The consecration of Dr. Bass was in Christ-church in the city of Philadephia, May 7th, 1797, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Provoost and Claggett.

‡ The consecration of Dr. Jarvis, was by bishop White, assisted by bishops Provoost and Bass.

as a report of a committee of one of the houses, to lie over for the consideration of the next convention; which was appointed to be in the city of Trenton, New Jersey. M.

It assembled there, in September 1801: when there was brought before the bishops present at it, three in number, the question of the admissibility of a resignation of the episcopal charge. A letter from bishop Provoost had been addressed to one of the bishops present, and by him laid before the house; stating, that induced by ill health and some circumstances of a domestic nature, he wished to retire from all public employment; and had therefore resigned, at a late meeting of the convention in New York, his jurisdiction of bishop in that state. In consequence of this resignation, the Rev. Benjamin Moore, D. D. who, on account of bishop Provoost's resignation of the rectory of Trinity church, in the city of New York, had been chosen to that place, was also elected to succeed to the episcopacy. The house of bishops, having taken this subject under their serious consideration, and doubting of the propriety of sanctioning episcopal resignation, declined any act to that effect. But being sensible of the exigency existing in the state of New York, they consented to the consecration of an assistant bishop: it being understood, that he should be competent in point of character to all the episcopal duties; and, that the extent in which the same were to be discharged by him, should be dependent on such regulations as expediency might dictate to the church in New York; grounded on the indisposition of bishop

Provoost, and with his concurrence. Conformably with the line of conduct thus laid down, Dr. Benjamin Moore, being duly recommended, was consecrated during the session, in St. Michael's church Trenton; and took his seat in the house of bishops.

In this convention, the important business of the articles was again taken up; and now, for the first time, authoritatively acted on. After repeated discussions and propositions, it had been found, that the doctrines of the Gospel, as they stand in the 39 articles of the church of England, with the exception of such matters as are local, were more likely to give general satisfaction, than the same doctrines in any new form that might be devised. The former were therefore adopted by the two houses of convention, without their altering of even the obsolete diction in them; but with notices of such changes as change of situation had rendered necessary. Exclusively of such, there is one exception; that of adapting the article concerning the creeds, to the former exclusion of the Athanasian.

It is further to be remembered, that, in regard to subscription to the articles, there is a considerable difference between the form required in the church of England, as laid down in her 36th canon; and that prescribed in the constitution of the American church. The latter form had so far acquired the approbation of the English prelates, as to be thought sufficient on the part of those who came to them for consecration, from America. N.

Throughout this narrative, it must have appeared, that the object kept in view, in all the consultations

held, and the determinations formed, was the perpetuating of the episcopal church, on the ground of the general principles which she had inherited from the church of England; and of not departing from them, except so far as either local circumstances required, or some very important cause rendered proper. To those acquainted with the system of the church of England, it must be evident, that the object here stated was accomplished on the ratification of the articles.

The next triennial convention was in the city of New York, September 11th, 1804. Canons were passed, extending to a greater variety of objects, than had been provided for before. An office was framed and ordered to be used, at the induction of ministers to the rectorship of churches. A course of ecclesiastical studies of candidates for orders, was prescribed by the bishops. And the constitution was altered, agreeably to a proposition made in the preceding convention and notified to the conventions in the states, so as that the future triennial conventions shall be in the month of May, instead of September. During the session, the Rev. Samuel Parker, D. D. rector of Trinity church, in Boston, was consecrated bishop in Trinity church, New York, in the room of bishop Bass, who had departed this life. There had also died, since the last convention, bishop Smith of South Carolina. And it was understood, that the Rev. Edward Jenkins, D. D. who had been elected to supply his place, had declined the station. Since the events here recorded,

bishop Parker departed this life, a few months after his consecration. O.

The next meeting of the general convention was in the city of Baltimore, from May 17th, 1808, to the 26th of the same month. Two bishops only (bishops White and Claggett) were present at this convention; and the church in seven states only was represented.

There was now ratified the long proposed amendment of the constitution; annulling the provision, by which four fifths of the house of clerical and lay deputies could accomplish a measure, without the concurrence of the house of bishops.

There was also proposed another amendment of the constitution, for the preventing of alterations in the liturgy, unless the same should have been proposed at a previous convention.

The whole body of the canons was reviewed, and underwent considerable alterations.

A committee was appointed, to address the church in the different states. The objects in view, were to procure a more full attendance on future conventions, and to extend the episcopacy to the western states.

"The office of Induction," established by the last convention, was changed in name to "The office of Institution," and rested on recommendation, not on requisition, as before.

The sense of the two houses was given on two points, which had created diversity of opinion and of practice—Whether a minister ought to officiate at the funeral of any person killed in a duel; and—Whether a minister should unite in marriage any

person who has been divorced; unless it be on account of the other party's having been guilty of adultery. Both these questions were decided in the negative.

There was also introduced into the house of clerical and lay deputies, on recommendation of the church in Maryland, the subject of marriage, as connected with the degrees of consanguinity and affinity. But on communication of the matter to the house of bishops, it was, on their recommendation, referred to a future convention.

Thirty hymns, were added to the Book of Psalms and Hymns.

As ordained by a canon of the last convention, a pastoral letter from the house of bishops to the members of this church was drawn up by them, communicated to the house of clerical and lay deputies, and there read.

On the rising of the convention, Newhaven, in the state of Connecticut, was appointed as the next place of meeting. The session was ended, by an attendance on the morning service of the day, which was the festival of the Ascension. P.

Agreeably to the aforesaid appointment; the next general convention was held in the city of Newhaven, on Tuesday the 21st of May, 1811. It continued in session, until Friday the 24th. Only bishops White and Jarvis, of the house of bishops, were present. The church in nine states was represented.

They ratified the amendment to the constitution proposed at the last convention, restraining from alterations of the Liturgy, except such as may be proposed at one convention and determined on at another.

On the subject of the canons, nothing was done, except the repealing of the last or 46th of the canons, as passed at the last convention, entitled, "Providing for making known the Constitution and Canons of the Church."

The rule prohibiting the officiating at the funerals of persons killed in duels, was so far moderated, as to allow of the same, if, on any occasion, the party in question had manifested repentance.

There were some communications made in regard to the western churches, and the extending of the episcopacy to them; but a plan to that effect was not yet matured. Further attention to the subject was committed to the bishops of this church, in Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The attendance of so few of the bishops; three of the four absent bishops being prevented by bodily indisposition, and the remaining bishop being absent by indispensable engagements; it was agreed not to take up, at present, the important subject of marriages, within certain degrees of consanguinity and affinity.

A pastoral address was sent by the bishops to the other house, to be printed with the journal agreeably to a requisition of the 45th canon.

It had been expected, that on the occasion of this convention, there would have been a consecration of two bishops: of the Rev. Dr. John Henry Hobart, chosen assistant bishop for the state of New York; and of the Rev. Alexander Viets Griswold, chosen bishop for the four states of Massachusetts, New

Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode Island. The expectation was disappointed, by the want of the canonical number on the spot. But the testimonials of the bishops elect were signed; and the two bishops present repaired with them to the city of New York: where with the assistance of the right Rev. bishop Provoost, whose indisposition, although, with difficulty, permitted his attendance in the place of his residence, and with the assistance of bishop Jarvis, the consecration was performed by the presiding bishop on the 29th of May, in Trinity church, in the said city.

It was referred to the presiding bishop, "to address a letter, in behalf of this convention, to the venerable society in England for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts, informing them that the church in the state of Vermont is duly organized, and in union with the protestant episcopal churches in the United States, being placed under the jurisdiction of the bishop of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont; that a board of trustees of donations to the church has been incorporated in the state of Massachusetts; and that in the opinion of this convention, the society may safely confide the care of their lands in Vermont to such attorney or attornies, as may be recommended by the said board of trustees, and approved of by the ecclesiastical convention of Vermont."

When the convention rose, it was agreed to hold the next triennial convention in the city of Philadelphia. Q

The next triennial convention was held, agreeably to appointment of that of 1811, in the city of Philadelphia, from Tuesday the 17th of May, to Tuesday the 24th of the same month, in the year 1814. The bishops present at it were, bishop White, of the church in Pennsylvania, bishop Hobart, the assistant bishop of the church in New York, bishop Griswold, of the Eastern Diocess, bishop Dehon, of South Carolina,* and, the second day of the session, bishop Richard C. Moore, of Virginia.

In the last mentioned state, the church had been, for many years, more and more under a decline. On the decease of bishop Madison, there had ensued a difficulty in the choice of a successor, until a few gentlemen, some of the clerical and some of the lay order, suggested the choice of the gentleman mentioned above, who had acquired considerable popularity in the city of New York; wherein there was a large congregation under his ministry. The defect of episcopal maintenance was expected to be surmounted, by connecting the office of bishop with that of the rectory of a church recently erected in the city of Richmond, on the site of a theatre, destroyed a few years before by a fire, wherein a considerable proportion of the inhabitants had been consumed. The requisite testimonials having been furnished, Dr. Moore was consecrated in St. James's

* Bishop Dehon had been consecrated, October 15th, 1812, in Christ church, in the city of Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Jarvis and Hobart.

church, Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart, Griswold, and Dehon. The sermon preached at the opening of the convention, serving for the consecration also, was by bishop Hobart of New York. He supplied the place of bishop Claggett of Maryland, who was kept away by indisposition.

There were three canons passed at this convention. One of them was concerning the alms and contributions at the holy communion. They are subjected to the distribution of the minister, or such person as they may be committed to by him. The provision was designed to limit munificence of this description to poor communicants, and to sustain a pastoral intercourse with them. The cause of interposition in this matter, was some proposals of appropriation said to have been made, for church purposes indeed, but wide of the original design of the oblations at the Lord's table.

The next canon was explanatory of the 29th, guarding against the effect of its excluding from diocesan conventions and votes in the choice of bishops, of uninstituted ministers and deacons, where these are not excluded by the respective diocesan constitutions; and further, against the extending of the office of Institution to gatherings of persons not bound together by a common interest in a place of worship.

The remaining canon was a repeal of so much of the 45th, as requires the reading in the general convention, of the parochial reports entered on

the journals of the different state conventions. The design of this, was to devolve on the church in each state, the preparing of a report of its concerns. Accordingly, this was provided for by a separate resolve.

There was also entered on the journal an explanation of the 19th canon; which regulates the dress of candidates for orders, and other particulars relative to them. The explanation goes to the point, that such provisions are merely a guard against popular mistakes.

At the instance of the clerical members from the diocess of Connecticut, who acted under instructions from the convention of that state, the bishops gave their sense of some matters in the 9th canon, and in the 40th. Their sense, which was sanctioned by the house of clerical and lay deputies, is as follows:

The 9th canon having provided, that some literary qualifications, therein specified, may be dispensed with, in consideration of certain other qualifications of the candidate for the ministry, the bishops define the latter to be, a considerable extent of theological learning, a peculiar aptitude to teach, and a large share of prudence. The 40th canon having referred to persons, who join a congregation of this church from some other religious society, the bishops rested the evidence of the membership of such a congregation on the two circumstances, of their being baptized persons, and of their possessing an interest in its concerns, by express or implied permission. But there is a caution against its being supposed, that a

more definite mode for the same object may not hereafter be profitably adopted.

It was thought proper in this convention, to issue a declaration, that the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, is the church formerly known among us, under the name of "the Church of England in America." Accordingly, an instrument to this effect was drawn up by the bishops, and received the approbation of the house of clerical and lay deputies.

At the suggestion of the bishops, the house of clerical and lay deputies joined them in an instrument, designed for the introduction of the posture of standing, during the singing of any portion of the psalms or hymns in metre. This comely practice had recently been introduced, in some of the congregations of this church: in all of which, it was heretofore the custom to sit, during that act of devotion.

In consideration of the scarcity of the homilies of the church of England, and of their being recognized by the articles of this church, although with due regard to the diversity of local circumstances, the two houses made a provision, which has occasioned an edition of them in this country. In the event of a failure of this, they were to be provided for the use of candidates for the ministry, by the bishops, or other ecclesiastical authorities in the respective states.

On the journal of the last triennial convention, the providing for an episcopacy in the western states

was held out as a desirable object. Intermediate circumstances having prevented the acting on this business, it was again held out as a matter to be kept in view.

On the same journal there was recorded a measure, designed to obtain from the society (in England) for Propagating the Gospel, a legal title to lands in Vermont; originally appropriated for the episcopal church in those states, but vested in that society in trust. All proceedings in this business was suspended, at first by the circumstance that the necessary documents were not in preparation; and since, by the occurrence of the war.

In consequence of a communication to the bishops proposing to them, what was considered as a profitable improvement in the Book of Common Prayer; they proposed to the house of clerical and lay deputies a declaration, that it was not intended to bring the Book under review during this convention. And in consequence of a communication proposing to the bishops, to give their sanction to a work on a subject of great importance in religion, they made it a rule of their house, that in future, no application of this sort shall be considered as regularly before them: and they proposed to the house of clerical and lay deputies, a declaration to the same effect. The house of clerical and lay deputies signified their concurrence in the proposals, with their thanks, for what they called "the judicious course adopted in reference to these subjects."

A question was moved in each of the houses, as to the propriety of establishing a theological school, to be exclusively under the patronage of the general convention. The subject was referred to a future meeting of the body; and in the mean time, measures were to be taken to ascertain the general wish on the subject, in each of the states.

A proposal was also made, to grant an exclusive copy-right of the Book of Common Prayer, for a valuable consideration. This also was delayed, under the same provision for the ascertaining of the general sense of the church; and with it, advice in law.

As at each of the last two conventions, a pastoral letter was drawn up by the house of bishops, and read in the house of clerical and lay deputies.

The convention appointed their next triennial meeting to be in the city of New York. R.

Agreeably to appointment at the last general convention, there assembled another in the city of New York, on the 20th of May 1817. There were present all the bishops: the house then consisting of bishops White, Hobart, Griswold, Dehon, Moore, Kemp, and Croes. The occasion was opened by a discourse from bishop Griswold.*

* During the recess of the convention, Dr. Kemp had been consecrated on the 1st day of September, 1814, in Christ church, in the city of Brunswick, New Jersey, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart and Moore. And Dr. Croes had been consecrated on the 19th day of November, 1815, in St. Peter's church in the city of Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart and Kemp.

In consequence of an application from the church in North Carolina, in which a convention had been held, the said church was considered as having acceeded to the ecclesiastical constitution. From the time of the revolutionary war, there had been but temporary supplies of the ministry, in a few places; but some clergymen, recently settled in the state, in connexion with some influential lay gentlemen, had taken active measures for the revival of our communion.

The presiding bishop, made report of sundry matters committed to him, by the last convention. They were the certifying to the venerable society (in England) for the Propagation of the Gospel, of certain facts in favour of the church in Vermont, relatively to lands of which the titles were vested in the society—the taking of measures, relatively to the organizing of the church beyond the Alleghany mountains, and the republishing of the journals of this church from the beginning. The first and the last had been carried into effect, and the other had been attended to, as far as circumstances would permit. The thanks of the house were voted to the presiding bishop.

Relatively to the last mentioned subject, the house of bishops saw cause, to record their opinion as follows:

Resolved, that it be recommended to the Episcopal congregations in the states referred to in the above communications, where conventions are not already organized, to organize conventions, which

may be received into union with this convention, and, when expedient, may unite, according to the canons, in the choice of a bishop, having jurisdiction over those states; and that this convention have received with much satisfaction information of the measures which have been already adopted in the state of Ohio, for the organization of the Church in that state.

Resolved, that though the measure of a convention comprising sundry states in the western country, may be a measure of temporary expediency, it cannot be authorised by this convention consistently with the general constitution of the church, which recognizes only a convention of the church in each state.

Resolved, that it be earnestly recommended to the authorities of this church, in each state respectively, to adopt measures for sending missionaries to our destitute brethren in the western states: such missionaries to be subject to the direction of the ecclesiastical authority of the state or states in which they may officiate.

Resolved, that the presiding bishop be requested to transmit the foregoing resolutions to such person or persons as he may judge proper."

This resolve was carried into effect, partly by a canon made during the session, and partly by a forwarding of the contemplated communications.

The several bishops made reports on the sense of the church in their respective dioceses, on the subject of a theological school. There was diversity of opinion, but the general sense, in both houses, was

in favour of a general school; which on the proposal of the house of bishops, and with the consent of the house of clerical and lay deputies, was determined to be instituted in New York. For the carrying of the design into effect there was chosen a committee, consisting of members of both houses. On the part of the house of bishops, there were chosen bishops White, Hobart, and Croes; and on the part of the house of clerical and lay deputies, Drs. Wharton, Harris, and How, honourable Rufus King, Charles Fenton Mercer, Esq., and William Meredith, Esq.

The house of bishops thought it expedient, to make a solemn call on the attention of the clergy in relation to the 22d canon, which enjoins on them diligence in catechetical instruction and lectures. The bishops consider these as among the most important duties of clergymen, and among the most effectual means of promoting religious knowledge and practical piety.

It being represented to the house of bishops by bishop Hobart, that the congregation of du St. Esprit in the city of New York, having joined the communion of the episcopal church, with their minister, who had lately received episcopal ordination, which congregation consisted originally of protestant emigrants from France; and there being many to whom the French language is still more familiar than the English, it is expedient that they be furnished with the Liturgy in the former language; and that there is such a Liturgy, not sanctioned by this convention; it was recommended to the said bishop to

cause the said French Liturgy to be examined, in order to ascertain how far the translation is correct; and to confirm the use thereof, with such amendments and improvements as the case may call for; and to declare it to be the Liturgy which may be used by any minister of this church who may officiate in a congregation to whom the French language is familiar.

The bishops issued the following call on the members of this church; and sent it to the house of clerical and lay deputies, to be there read: which was accordingly done:

"The house of bishops, solicitous for the preservation of the purity of the church, and the piety of its members, are induced to impress upon the clergy the important duty, with a discreet but earnest zeal, of warning the people of their respective cures, of the danger of an indulgence in those worldly pleasures which may tend to withdraw the affections from spiritual things. And especially on the subject of gaming, of amusements involving cruelty to the brute creation, and of theatrical representations, to which some peculiar circumstances have called their attention,—they do not hesitate to express their unanimous opinion, that these amusements, as well from their licentious tendency, as from the strong temptations to vice which they afford, ought not to be frequented. And the bishops cannot refrain from expressing their deep regret at the information that in some of our large cities, so little respect is paid to the feelings of the members of the church, that the-

atrical representations are fixed for the evenings of her most solemn festivals."

On the question referred by the last convention, to be reported on in this, relatively to the copy-right of the Book of Common Prayer; the measure was considered as disapproved of, so far as opinion could be ascertained.

A proposed change in the ecclesiastical constitution, was referred to the several state conventions. It was to change the time of the triennial meeting to the 1st Tuesday in October.

The house of clerical and lay deputies proposed to the house of bishops, the designating of a standard copy of the Old and New Testaments. It was too late to enter on the business, and "the house of bishops deeming the fulfilment of the request of the house of clerical and lay deputies, on the subject of an authentic edition of the Holy Bible, a matter requiring very serious attention and deliberation, resolve, that its members will give such attention and deliberation to the subject, previously to the next meeting of the general convention, and report at the said meeting.

The table of degrees of consanguinity and affinity, prohibitory of marriage was again referred; and a committee was appointed on the subject, bishops White, Kemp, and Croes.

There passed three canons. The first was the limiting of the operation of the 2d and 37th canons, so far as regarded the states westward of the mountains. The professed reason, was, the providing of

that country with a bishop, if a suitable person should be presented, whatever might be the number of resident presbyters, and even if there be none. There was the further reason, that if it should be thought convenient to unite with a western diocess the western counties of Pennsylvania and Virginia; and if there should be the consent of the church in each of the said states, there might be a temporary provision for the purpose, consistent with the integrity of the church in each state.

The second canon makes a clergyman's renunciation of the ministry a cause of admonition, or of suspension or of degradation.

The third canon provided, that in the case of expulsion from the communion, and information given to the bishop as required by the second rubric before the communion service; if the expelled party make no complaint, there shall be no inquiry instituted. The bishop on receiving complaint, is to institute an inquiry, and the notice given by the minister is a sufficient presentation.

A pastoral letter was again drawn up by the house of bishops, and read in the house of clerical and lay deputies.

When the convention adjourned, Philadelphia was appointed to be the place of the next meeting. S.

2. ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

AND

REMARKS.

A. Page 7. *Of the Question of American Episcopacy, as agitated in the Colonies.*

THERE were two periods, which were especially productive of pamphlets and newspaper essays on this subject. The first of these periods, was about the time of the civil controversy, which arose on the occasion of the stamp act. The question of American Episcopacy was brought forward in a pamphlet by the Rev. East Apthorp, missionary at Cambridge, Massachusetts; a native of that province, but afterwards possessed of several considerable preferments in England. His production was answered by Dr. Mayhew, a congregational minister of Boston. Several others engaged in the dispute; among whom was Abp. Secker; although his name was not prefixed to his pamphlet, which has been since printed in his works.

The other period was a few years before the revolutionary war; when the Rev. Dr. Chandler of

Elizabeth-Town, New-Jersey, made an appeal to the public, in favour of the object of obtaining an American Episcopate. There were various answers to the pamphlet and defences of it, in other pamphlets published by the Doctor and others. In addition to these, the newspapers abounded with periodical and other productions. The author of the present performance was at that time a youth: but from what he then heard and observed, he believes it was impossible to have obtained the concurrence of a respectable number of laymen, in any measure for the obtaining of an American Bishop. What could have been the reason of this, when there was scarcely a member of the Episcopal Church, who would not have been ready to avow his preference of episcopacy to presbytery; and of a form of prayer, to that which is extemporary? It is believed to have been owing to an existing jealousy, that American Episcopacy would have been made an instrument of enforcing the new plan of civil government, which had been adopted in Great Britain; in contrariety to original compact and future security for freedom: a regard to which was as prevalent among episcopalians, as among any description of their fellow-citizens.

Perhaps these sentiments may be supposed to be contradicted by the circumstance, that during the revolutionary war, a considerable number of the American people became inclined to the British cause; and, that of them, a great proportion were episcopalians. But this is not inconsistent with the

sentiments expressed. On the subject of parliamentary taxation, it would probably have been impossible to have found in any city, town, or vicinity of the colonies, such a number of persons not vehemently opposed to it, as would have been sufficient to form a congregation. Out of the sphere of governmental influence, there was scarcely a man of that description. When the controversy became ripened into war, some fell off from the cause, from danger to their persons and their properties; others, from the sentiment that the public evil hazarded, might prove worse than that intended to be avoided; and others perhaps, although very few, from scruples of conscience. They who were influenced by these, had stopt short at the taking of arms; for which, the passion was general. To find freedom in this step, and yet to withdraw while the cause of so important a measure existed, may have been the dictate of prudence, but could not have been that of conscience. All the aforesaid circumstances operated with increased vigour, when the question of independence was forced on the reluctant public. Had the British arms succeeded, and thus the right of parliamentary taxation been established—for there was no offer of relinquishment of it, until after the alliance with France—a membership of the Episcopal Church would have been little more than a political mark, to distinguish those who should advocate claims hostile to American interests.

To persons who may give their attention to the colonial history, the question may occur—Why did

not the British government so far consult its own interests, as to authorise the consecrating of bishops for America? This question shall be considered, on the ground of views taken of past incidents. Any ministry, who should have ventured on the measure, would have raised up against themselves the whole of the dissenting interest in England; and the weight of that interest was more important to them in their estimation, than the making of a party for the mother country in the colonies. The matter is resolveable into the ignorance of government of the real state of the people, whom they expected to govern so easily, at so great a distance. Again, this ignorance is resolveable into their depending on information received from persons, whose judgments or whose honesty they ought, the most of all, to have distrusted: an error, which hung heavily on all their proceedings, until the period when it ceased to be of consequence.

Lest it should be thought, that the dissenting interest in England has been magnified; it ought to be known, that the forces of the different denominations of dissenters—with the exception of the people called quakers—was concentrated in a committee in London. The author was acquainted with a member of that committee in England, in 1771 and 1772; and knew that he had free access to the ministry. The impression then received, was its being an object of government to avoid any thing of a religious nature, which might set the dissenters in a political opposi-

tion. They had great influence in elections to parliament.

As to the laity's uniting in an application for the episcopacy; it is natural to suppose, that this, if to be found any where, would have been found in Virginia; a province settled by members of the Church of England, who were still the great mass of its inhabitants. How far they were from favouring the endeavour, may be learned from the following statement.

In the year 1771, a convention of twelve clergymen, there being about a hundred in the province, and, after a larger convention had rejected the measure now adopted, drew up a petition to the crown for the appointment of an American bishop. Four of the clergy protested; and, because of their protest, received the thanks of the house of Burgesses. When it is considered, that a great majority of that house must have been of the establishment; that there never had been any attempt among them to throw off any property of its distinctive character; that they must have felt the want of ecclesiastical discipline over immoral clergymen, and the burthen of sending to England for ordination; there seems no way of accounting for their conduct, but the danger resulting from the newly introduced system of colonial government. This is warranted by the absurdity of the reasons on which the protest of the four clergymen was bottomed; among which, perhaps the most absurd, was professed respect for the diocesan authority of the bishops of London: it be-

ing notorious, that the then bishop and his immediate predecessors had manifested zeal for the appointment now opposed. In consequence of the proceeding of the house of Burgesses, a convention of the clergy of New York and New Jersey published an address to the episcopalians in Virginia, drawn up by Dr. Chandler. It must be evident on reading the address, that the reasoning of it was unanswerable; and that, as the address expresses, there were on the other side "only unreasonable jealousies and groundless suspicions:" unreasonable and groundless, so far as they were declared, and referring to titles to civil offices, and the like; while there was a sentiment silently operating, to the effect above stated. Whether the address of the twelve clergy crossed the Atlantic, is not here known. This was to depend on its being signed by a majority of the clergy of the province; which was probably prevented by the public sentiment. It is remarkable, that of the two gentlemen appointed by the house of Burgesses to deliver their thanks to the four protestors, the first named of them—Richard Henry Lee, fifteen years after, and then president of congress, did not hesitate to furnish to the two bishops who went for consecration, a certificate that the business on which they went was consistent with the civil institutions of the American republic.*

* For the correctness of the opinion expressed of the utter inability of the British administrations for the government of the colonies, there may be here a reference to Bisset's History of the Reign of George III. This author wrote in opposition

Certain it is, that no endeavours for a lay petition for episcopacy were made. Some accounted for this, on the principle, that as the wished for bishop would have a relation to the clergy only, the matter concerned them and none others. But what sort of a bishop would he have been; who should have had no relation to the laity, except through the medium of the clergy? The well-informed advocates for episcopacy, must doubtless have known the imperfection of such a scheme: but they who suggested the proviso, must have considered it as a prudential expedient.

Had bishops been consecrated for America, on the plan proposed by Archbishop Secker; the civil government no further interfering than in the grant of the royal permission; it is difficult to perceive, how hindrance could have been attempted by any description of persons, without an avowal of intolerance; and without a disposition to unprovoked insurrection, beyond what can be supposed from any thing that passed of a political description. That good prelate's scheme is unfolded in his letter to Mr. Walpole, printed among the prelate's works. From the circumstance, that, since the revolution, an act of parliament was held necessary to permit the giving

to Belsham, and may therefore be supposed on the whole favourable to government. But he points out with candour the contrariety between the views of ministers, and the consequences of their acts—evidently bottomed on false information, and their relying on the persons whom they ought the most to have distrusted.

of a beginning to the American succession, it may be thought, that the archbishop was mistaken, in his opinion of the sufficiency of the licence of the king. But this would not be a correct inference. The case became altered by the event of American independence: and although there was legislative interference in regard to the church in the United States; there have been bishops consecrated for Nova Scotia and Canada, on royal authority only; agreeably to the opinion which had been expressed by Archbishop Secker. On the ground of the practicability of giving bishops to America, without invoking the aid of parliament; it was the opinion of the author, at the time of the controversy here noticed, that no disturbance would have happened, however threatened by some who were indeed very violent on the subject.

But he is not backward to acknowledge, that he thought he foresaw difficulties to the episcopal church, from the other source here hinted. It was not unlikely, that the British government, had they sanctioned an episcopacy in the colonies, would have endeavoured to render it subservient to the support of a party, on the plan of the newly projected domination. In this case, the effects would have been hostile to the estimation of episcopacy in the minds of the people; the great mass of whom, including the best informed, and those who had the property of the country in their hands, had set themselves in a determined, and, as the author thinks, a justifiable opposition to the new system.

It is well known, that religious opinion has been often made, by circumstances, the test and the instrument of a political party; when the views of the party had not any more natural connexion with the opinion, than with its opposite. Thus, in England, Arminianism was conceived of as allied to absolute monarchy, and Calvinism to popular privilege; at the same time that, in the United Netherlands, the latter supported the monarchical, and the former the republican branch of the constitution. The grievances which produced the American war, were the result of claims of one people over another; and not of the question, as to what would be the wisest distribution of the internal powers of either. Besides, it may be remarked, that episcopacy, as now settled in America, must be confessed at least as analogous as presbytery—the author thinks much more so—to the plan of civil government, which mature deliberation has established over the union; and to those plans which, even during the heats of popular commotion, were adopted for the individual states. The sentiment wished to be here impressed, is, that episcopacy, under the old regimen, would have probably been considered as subservient to an authority, of the decline and final abrogation of which there were causes, which must have produced their effect at last; if the effect had not been hastened much faster than could have been expected, by intemperate counsels and by injudicious measures.

It would be a misinterpretation of what the author has here written; were it applied as a censure

on what some of his brethren, who were before him, have advanced in favour of their right to an episcopate. Far from this, he honours their memories; and considers the arguments on which they rested their claim, as unanswerable. What has been said, is merely an argument from certain causes existing in the character and the circumstances of the American people, to what would have been the effects in a supposed case, which did not occur.

It may be thought, that there should be allowed a large deduction from the weight of the observations made, on account of the proportion of the American people, whose conduct or whose wishes were in contrariety to the general sentiment of their countrymen. But this is apparent only. There were no persons more hostile to the British claims, than they who withdrew from the resistance of them: this with very few exceptions. When the controversy issued in war, and afterwards in independence; at each of the periods there was a large defection from the American cause, produced by the motives which have been detailed.

No doubt, the number of dissentients was increased by unjustifiable measures of the newly erected governments in some of the states. Still, the sentiment was universal, of the sacred nature of the rights invaded; and would again have had its effect on the minds of the temporary advocates of Great Britain, had the war terminated in her favour.

Further; the opinions here expressed may seem indicative of aversion to the British character, in the

author's mind. Far from entertaining any such aversion, he prefers the laws and the manners of the British nation, to those of any other; either from partiality to the country of his ancestors; or, as he believes, in consequence of an impartial comparison. But he reasons on the principle, which he thinks warranted by the experience of all ages, that national domination, under whatever circumstances, will be tyranny. An individual may be a tyrant, or otherwise, according to his personal character: but no people ever stuck at any crimes, which advanced their wealth at the expense of those governed by them; especially, if it were at a distance.

In short, however great the inconveniences brought on the episcopal church in America by the revolution; the author has all along cherished the hope, that they will not be permanently so injurious to her, as would have been her alliance with a distant power, in hostility to the common interests of the country; accompanied by the jealousies and the odium, which would have been attached to that circumstance.

Perhaps, it may be thought, that a deduction should be made from any apparent weight in the theory here delivered, on account of the establishments existing in Maryland and Virginia: which would not have been overset by the British government. The subsequently prostrate condition of the church in these states, may be urged as a proof of the advantages which would have attended a continuance of the establishment. But this reasoning is inadmissible; if, as before supposed, the prostration

was owing to the preceding system; of an amendment of which there was no prospect. Besides, it should be remembered, that before the revolution, the parts of those states, now the most populous, were fast settling by persons differing from the establishment. Even in the old parts, numbers were leaving the church, to attend the ministrations of preachers, who had recently availed themselves of the very little regard entertained for their clergy, to produce a popular desertion of the church itself. Under such circumstances, it was hardly to be expected, that the establishment would have redounded to the reputation and the increase of the church generally. It was becoming more and more unpopular; with some, because it was not considered as promoting piety; and with these and others, because they thought the provision for it a useless burthen on the community.*

* On the question of burthen, as detached from all other considerations, there is a fallacy not generally perceived. Under the present system, if the Gospel should be supported in the states concerned, as may now be confidently expected, the weight of the expense will fall disproportionably on people of moderate means. During the establishment, it fell on the rich, in tolerable proportion to their wealth.

There is another fallacy in this business, in the reproach brought on the church; when it ought to have fallen on the want of wisdom in the making of ministerial endowments, without some provision for ministerial fidelity.

Hence, however, a great proportion of the unpopularity, which led to the seizure and the sale of churches and glebes by the legislature of Virginia. It ought to be remembered, to the honour of Patrick Henry, that he resisted the said act, and that it

There is a remarkable fact in Virginia, countenancing the sentiments delivered. After the fall of the establishment, a considerable proportion of the clergy continued to enjoy the glebes—the law considering them as freeholds during life—without performing a single act of sacred duty: except, perhaps, that of marriage. They knew, that their public ministrations would not have been attended.

B. Page 8. *Of the Question of using the Liturgy, exclusively of the Prayers for the King and the Royal Family.*

As the cessation of the public worship of the episcopal church was very much owing to scruples on this point; it may be thought important, in reference to such future political changes, as are rendered possible by the uncertainty of human affairs.

could never be obtained until after his decease. This eminent man has been accused, of having always set his sail to the popular gale. There are several facts against the charge, and this is one of them: for he had to resist, through many years, the united efforts of men hostile to revealed religion in every form, and of other men who were professors of religion, but cherished rancorous hatred against the church of England in particular.

The author is the more free in speaking of the act of the legislature of Virginia, as it will go down to posterity, loaded with the reproach of unconstitutionality, by the supreme court of the United States: although their judgment will have no effect beyond the district of Columbia. See Cranch's Reports. Vol. 9.

So far as the author knows or believes, the difficulties which arose on this account were not of great extent in the southern states. In Maryland and in Virginia, there were many of the clergy whose connexions with their flocks were rendered, by their personal characters, dependent wholly on the continuance of the establishment; and, of course fell with it. Again, many worthy ministers entertained scruples, in regard to the oath of allegiance to the States, without the taking of which, they were prohibited from officiating, by laws alike impolitic and severe. But it must be seen, that scruples of this sort were of another nature than the question here stated for consideration. In the northern states, there were no such laws; but the clergy generally declined officiating, on the ground of their ecclesiastical tie to the liturgy of the church of England. As they were generally men of respectable characters, the discontinuance of their administrations had an unhappy effect on the church; and is here mentioned, as one cause contributing to the low state in which we were left by the revolutionary war.

With all possible tenderness to the plea of conscientious scruples, it will not be rash to affirm, that there was no ground for them in the promise—not an oath, as some suppose, although of equal solemnity—made previously to ordination in the church of England. It is as follows: The candidate declares —" That the Book of Common Prayer and of ordering of bishops, priests, and deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God; and that it may

lawfully so be used; and that he himself will use the form in the said Book prescribed, in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, and no other."

This promise ought to be taken in connexion with the pastoral duty generally; and with the discharge of it as stipulated for in the promises made at ordination; which require of the minister the reading of the prayers, and the administration of the sacraments.

But there occurs a case, in which there is an external necessity of omitting a few petitions, not involved in any Christian duty; so far as civil rulers are identified by name, or other personal description. In such a case, it seems evident, that the promise is the most nearly complied with, by the use of the liturgy to the extent which the external necessity permits.

When the Church of England was oppressed under the usurpations of parliament and of Cromwell; the clergy were molested in the use of the liturgy, because it was made illegal by act of parliament. But wherever the use of it was winked at, of which there are instances on record, they did not hesitate to avail themselves of the indulgence, with the exception of the political prayers; the use of which would have been highly penal.

For the communication with the court of Denmark, as contained in the Narrative, see Appendix, No. 1.

C. Page 11. *Of the Meeting in New-Brunswick, in May*, 1784.

The first communications, between the clergy of different states, were at this meeting. It took its rise, from a previous agreement between those of the city of New York and those of Philadelphia, carried on through the medium of the Rev. Abraham Beach, then resident in or near Brunswick. The substance of what passed is as follows:

There met, from the state of New York, the Rev. Messrs, Bloomer, Benjamin Moore, and Thomas Moore; from New Jersey, the Rev. Messrs. Beach, Fraser, and Ogden; and from Pennsylvania, the Rev. Dr. White, Dr. Magaw, and Mr. Blackwell. There happened to be in the town, on civil business, some lay-gentlemen, who, being represented by the clergy from New York and New Jersey as taking an interest in the welfare of the church, were requested to attend. They were Mr. John Stephens, Mr. Richard Stephens, Mr. Richard Dennis, and Mr. Hiet. The author presided at the meeting, and opened it with a sermon. Mr. B. Moore was secretary.

The first day was chiefly taken up, with discussing principles of ecclesiastical union. The clergy from Philadelphia read to the assembly the principles just before adopted, under appointments of their vestries, as will be related hereafter; and strongly recommended their taking of similar measures. The next

morning, the author was taken aside, before the meeting, by Mr. Benjamin Moore; who expressed the wish of himself and others, that nothing should be urged further on the subject; as they found themselves peculiarly circumstanced, in consequence of their having joined the clergy of Connecticut in their application for the consecration of a bishop. This brought to the knowledge of the clergy from Philadelphia, what they had not known, that Dr. Samuel Seabury of the state of New York, who had sailed for England just before the evacuation of New York by the British troops, carried with him a petition to the English bishops for his consecration.

In consequence of the measure taken as above stated, the gentlemen concerned in it thought, that during the pending of their application, they could not consistently join in any proceedings, which might be construed to interfere with it. Accordingly, the conversation of that day—on which the meeting ended—was principally confined to the business of the revival of the corporation for the relief of the widows and the children of the clergy; which had been held out, as an additional object of the interview.* But before the clergy parted, it was agreed to procure as general a meeting as might be, of representatives of the clergy and of the laity of the different states, in the city of New York, on the 6th of October following. The gentlemen of New York were

* This corporation, by mutual consent, and with a fair partition of the funds, has since resolved itself into three corporations, under charters from the three states.

to notify the brethren eastward; and those of Philadelphia were to do the same southward.

The author remarked at this meeting, that, notwithstanding the good humour which prevailed at it, the more northern clergymen were under apprehensions of there being a disposition on the part of the more southern, to make material deviation from the ecclesiastical system of England, in the article of church government. At the same time he wondered, that any sensible and well informed persons should overlook the propriety of accommodating that system, in some respects, to the prevailing sentiments and habits of the people of this country; now become an independent and combined commonwealth.

For the application of the clergy of Connecticut to the archbishop of York, the English primacy having become vacant, and the successor to it being not yet known in America; see Appendix No. 2.

D. Page 11. *Of the Meeting in New York, in October* 1784.

There were present from Massachusetts, the Rev. Mr. Parker; from Connecticut, the Rev. Mr. Marshall; from New York, the Rev. Messrs. Provoost, Beach, B. Moore, Bloomer, Cutting, T. Moore, and the Hon. James Duane, Marinus Willet, and J. Alsop, Esquires; from New Jersey, the Rev. Mr. Ogden, and John De Hart, John Chetwood, Esquires, and Mr. Samuel Spragg; from Pennsylvania, the Rev.

Drs. White and Magaw, the Rev. Mr. Hutchins, and Matthew Clarkson, Richard Willing, Samuel Powell, and Richard Peters, Esquires; from Delaware, the Rev. Messrs. Thorne and Wharton, and Mr. Robert Clay; from Maryland, the Rev. Dr. Smith; and from Virginia, the Rev. Mr. Griffith. The Rev. Dr. Smith presided, and the Rev. B. Moore was secretary. The names of the members are set down, because they do not appear on the subsequent journals; and because the short printed account of the proceedings of this meeting was in very few hands at the time, and is probably at this time generally destroyed or lost.

The present meeting, like that in May, is here spoken of as a voluntary one, and not an authorized convention; because there were no authorities from the churches in the several states, even in the appointments of the members; which were made from the congregations, to which they respectively belonged; except of Mr. Parker, from Massachusetts, of Mr. Marshall, from Connecticut, and of those who attended from Pennsylvania: even from these states, there was no further authority, than to deliberate and propose. Accordingly, the acts of the body were in the form of recommendation and proposal.

The principles of ecclesiastical union, recommended at the meeting, September 1784, are as follows:

1st. That there shall be a general convention of the episcopal church, in the United States of America.

2d. That the episcopal church, in each state, send deputies to the convention, consisting of clergy and laity.

3d. That associated congregations, in two or more states, may send deputies jointly.

4th. That the said church shall maintain the doctrines of the Gospel, as now held by the church of England; and shall adhere to the liturgy of the said church, as far as shall be consistent with the American revolution, and the constitutions of the respective states.

5th. That in every state, where there shall be a bishop duly consecrated and settled, he shall be considered as a member of the convention *ex officio.*

6th. That the clergy and laity, assembled in convention, shall deliberate in one body; but shall vote separately: and the concurrence of both shall be necessary, to give validity to every measure.

7th. That the first meeting of the convention shall be at Philadelphia, the Tuesday before the feast of St. Michael next; to which it is hoped, and earnestly desired, that the episcopal churches in the several states will send their clerical and lay deputies, duly instructed and authorised to proceed on the necessary business herein proposed for their deliberation.

The above resolves were, in substance, what had been determined on in Pennsylvania, in May; and after having been discussed and accommodated in a committee, were adopted by the assembly.

It is proper to remark, that although a clergyman appeared at this meeting, on the part of the church in Connecticut, it is not to be thought, that there was an obligation on any in that state, to support the above principles; because Mr. Marshall read to the assembly a paper, which expressed his being only empowered to announce, that the clergy of Connecticut had taken measures for the obtaining of an episcopate; that until their design, in that particular, should be accomplished, they could do nothing; but that as soon as they should have succeeded, they would come forward, with their bishop, for the doing of what the general interests of the church might require.

With this exception, the principles laid down appeared to be the sense of the meeting: and it seemed a great matter gained, to lay what promised to be a foundation for the continuing of the episcopal church, in the leading points of her doctrine, discipline, and worship; yet with such an accommodation to local circumstances, as might be expected to secure the concurrence of the great body of her members; and without any exterior opposition, to threaten the oversetting of the scheme.

At the present day, it may seem to have been of little consequence, to gain so considerable an assent, to what was determined at this meeting. But at the time in question, when the crisis presented a subject of deliberation entirely new, it was difficult to detach it in the minds of many, from a past habitual train of thinking. Some were startled at the very cir-

cumstance, of taking the stand of an independent church. There was a much more common prejudice, against the embracing of the laity in a scheme of ecclesiastical legislation. Besides these things, the confessed necessity of accommodating the service to the newly established civil constitution of the country, naturally awakened apprehensions of unlimited licence. Hence the restriction to the English liturgy, except in accommodation to the revolution: which restriction was not acquiesced in, as will be seen.

E. Page 12. *Of Proceedings in sundry states, previous to the Meetings in* 1784, *at New Brunswick, and at New York.*

As this convention acted by delegation, an account of the said proceedings seems to form a part of the present work.

The principles agreed on, at the said meetings, were analogous to those in the several states; with the exception of what was done by the clergy individually, in Connecticut.

In Massachusetts there was held a meeting of the clergy at Boston, September 8, 1784. In a letter received by the author from the Rev. Mr. Parker at the time, it appears, that the principal business of this meeting was the passing of the following resolves; which have evidently an allusion to what had been done in Philadelphia in the preceding May; and

communicated to Mr. Parker. The articles agreed on in Philadelphia, will appear lower down.

Those of Boston are,

1st, That the episcopal church in the United States of America is, and ought to be independent of all foreign authority, ecclesiastical and civil. But it is the opinion of this convention, that this independence be not construed or taken in so rigorous a sense, as to exclude the churches in America, separately or collectively, from applying for and obtaining from some regular episcopal foreign power, an American episcopate.

2dly, That the episcopal church in these states hath and ought to have, in common with all other religious societies, full and exclusive powers to regulate the concerns of its own communion.

3dly, That the doctrines of the Gospel be maintained, as now professed by the church of England; and uniformity of worship be continued, as near as may be to the Liturgy of the said church.

4thly, That the succession of the ministry be agreeable to the usage, which requireth the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons; that the rights and powers of the same be respectively ascertained; and that they be exercised according to reasonable laws, to be duly made.

5thly, That the power of making canons and laws be vested solely in a representative body of the clergy and the laity conjointly; in which body, the laity ought not to exceed, or their votes be more in number, than those of the clergy.

6thly, That no power be delegated to a general ecclesiastical government; except such as cannot conveniently be exercised by the clergy and vestries, in their respective congregations.

The only points in which the above differ from those which will be recorded, as laid down in Philadelphia, are, that in the former, they provide for an application to a foreign quarter; which was agreeable to intentions entertained in framing the latter, although not expressed; and that in the fifth article of the former it is specified, that the clergy and the laity ought to have an equal vote. This matter was afterwards settled to mutual satisfaction, in the meeting at New York. It is here taken notice of, because there was afterwards manifested a disposition in Massachusetts, to depart from the principles agreed on; that the clergy of that state, instead of sending a deputation to Philadephia in September, 1785, held a meeting of their own about the same time in Boston, in which they made considerable alterations in the Liturgy. Although they doubtless acted agreeably to what seemed best to them at the different times; yet this fluctuation of counsels is recorded, lest the latter measure, contemplated singly, should seem to do away the weight of the principles antecedently established.

In Connecticut, there was a meeting of the clergy, in March 1783; the principal measure of which, was the recommending of Dr. Samuel Seabury to the English bishops, for consecration. This was an act of the clergy generally in that state, and of a few

in New York; and is rather to be considered as done by them in their individual capacities, than as a regular ecclesiastical proceeding; because, as yet, there had not been any organized assembly, who could claim the power of acting for the church in consequence of either the express or the implied consent of the body of episcopalians. They who consider the bishop of a diocess, as related to its clergy alone, may differ from the author in this remark. But although he has heard such an opinion advanced in conversation, and even remembers it to have been sometimes published in the former controversies concerning American episcopacy; yet, it is so evidently contrary to the system as gathered from Scripture, and primitive antiquity, that he does not suppose it will be maintained in deliberate argument. His recording of this circumstance is not designed, either in disparagement of the personal character of bishop Seabury, or as doubting of the approbation of the measure by the whole church, in which he has since presided. In regard to the former, the author entertained for that bishop much affection and respect; the result of what was afterwards perceived in person, of his good sense and christian disposition. As to the latter, it is believed from what has been since learned, that no man could have been more acceptable; independently on the inclination said to have been afterwards manifested, of leaving all ecclesiastical matters to the clergy: which was done for a while; although the laity have been since introduced into the convention, as in the other states. But the

subject is here noticed, as one cause accounting for the failure of the application in England: a sentiment confirmed by subsequent information, as will appear in its proper place.

From letters in possession of the author, he finds, that in Connecticut, the idea of lay representation in ecclesiastical legislation, became associated with that of the trial and the degradation of clergymen by the same authority. That there is no such necessary association, is evident in the English system.

In Pennsylvania, there was a convention of the church, which began on the 24th of May, 1784. The steps leading to this convention were originated by the author, in the vestry of the churches under his parochial care, in consequence of a previous agreement with the Rev. Dr. Magaw, the rector of St. Paul's church, and the Rev. Mr. Blackwell, assistant minister to the author. The said vestry opened a communication on the subject, with the vestry of St. Paul's church: and by agreement of these two bodies, in conjunction with their clergy, notices were given, and suitable measures were taken, for the obtaining of the meeting of the convention.

The result of their deliberations, was the establishing of the following principles, as a foundation for the future forming of an ecclesiastical body, for the church at large.

1st, That the episcopal church in these states is, and ought to be, independent of all foreign authority, ecclesiastical or civil.

2dly, That it hath, and ought to have, in common with all other religious societies, full and exclusive powers, to regulate the concerns of its own communion.

3dly, That the doctrines of the Gospel be maintained, as now professed by the church of England; and uniformity of worship continued, as near as may be, to the Liturgy of the said church.

4thly, That the succession of the ministry be agreeable to the usage, which requireth the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons; that the rights and powers of the same, respectively, be ascertained; and that they be exercised according to reasonable laws, to be duly made.

5thly, That to make canons or laws, there be no other authority, than that of a representative body of the clergy and laity conjointly.

6thly, That no powers be delegated to a general ecclesiastical government, except such as cannot conveniently be exercised by the clergy and laity, in their respective congregations.*

* The steps preparatory to the resolves were as follow: they were the first advances towards a general organization, and are copied from the original journal, in possession.

Philadelphia, March 29th, 1784.

At the house of the Rev. Dr. White, rector of Christ-church and St. Peter's.

In consequence of appointments made by the vestry of Christ church and St. Peter's, as followeth:

"The rector mentioned to the vestry, that he lately had a conversation with the Rev. Dr. Magaw, on the subject of appointing committees from the vestries of their respective

As this was the first ecclesiastical assembly, in any of the states, consisting partly of lay members,

churches, to confer with the clergy of the said churches, on the subject of forming a representative body of the episcopal church in this state, and wished to have the sense of vestry thereon. After some consideration, the vestry agreed to appoint Matthew Clarkson and Wm. Pollard for Christ church, and Dr. Clarkson and John Chaloner for St. Peter's;" and by the vestry of St. Paul's church, as followeth: " A copy of the minute of the vestry of Christ church and St. Peter's, of the 13th of November last, was, by the Rev. Dr. Magaw, laid before this vestry, and is as follows, (here follows the above minute.) The above minute being taken into consideration, and this vestry concurring in opinion thereon, unanimously appointed Lambert Wilmer and Plunket Fleeson, Esqrs. on the part of this church, to carry into execution the good intentions of the said minute."

The clergy, together with the gentlemen named in the said appointments, (except Matthew Clarkson, Esq. and Dr. Clarkson, who were detained by sickness,) assembled at the time and place above mentioned.

The body thus assembled, having taken into consideration the necessity of speedily adopting measures for the forming of a plan of ecclesiastical government for the episcopal church, were of opinion, that a subject of such importance ought to be taken up, if possible, with the concurrence of the episcopalians of the United States in general. They, therefore, resolved to ask a conference with such members of the episcopal congregations of the counties in this state, as were then in town; and the clergy present undertook to converse with such persons as they could find of the above description, and to request their meeting the body at Christ church, on Wednesday evening at seven o'clock.

Christ church, March 31st.

The clergy and the two committees assembled, and elected Dr. White their chairman.

The clergy reported, that agreeably to their promise, they

and as the author was considered at the time to be the proposer of the measure; the principle of it having been advocated, about a year before, in a pamphlet

had spoken to several gentlemen, who readily consented to the conference proposed.

The meeting continued for some time; when it was signified to them, that several gentlemen who had designed to attend, were detained by the unexpected sitting of the honourable house of assembly, they being members of that house. The Hon. James Read, Esq. attended, according to desire. After some conversation on the business of this meeting, it was resolved, that a circular letter be addressed to the wardens and vestrymen of the respective episcopal congregations in the state, and that the same be as follows, viz.

Gentlemen,

The episcopal clergy in this city, together with committees appointed by the vestry of Christ church and St. Peter's, and another committee appointed by the vestry of St. Paul's church in the same city, for the purpose of proposing a plan of ecclesiastical government, being now assembled, are of opinion, that a subject of such importance ought to be taken up, if possible, with the concurrence of the episcopalians of the United States in general. They have therefore resolved, as preparatory to a general consultation, to request the church-wardens and vestrymen of each episcopal congregation in the state, to delegate one or more of their body to assist at a meeting to be held in this city on Monday the 24th day of May next; and such clergymen as have parochial cure in the said congregations to attend the meeting, which they hope will contain a full representation of the episcopal church in this state. The above resolve, gentlemen, the first step in their proceedings, they now respectfully and affectionately communicate to you.

Signed, in behalf of the body now assembled,

WM. WHITE, Chairman.

In consequence of the above circular, the contemplated meeting was held in Christ church on the 24th of May, 1784. The

known to be his; he thinks it proper, to give in this place, a short statement of his reasons, in its favour.

From what he has read of primitive usage, he thinks it evident, that in very early times, when every church, that is, the christian people in every city and convenient district round it, was an ecclesiastical commonwealth, with all the necessary powers of self-government; the body of the people had a considerable share in its determinations. He is not setting up lord King's plea, of the people's having been a constituent part of the ancient ecclesiastical synods; for which there does not seem to be any ground; the passages quoted to the effect by his lordship proving no more, than that some of the laity were occasionally present at the deliberations. But there is here spoken of the practice which was prevalent, before the introduction of ecclesiastical synods; of the holding of which there is little or no evidence, until the middle of the second century. The same sanction which the people gave originally in a body, they might lawfully give by representation. In reference to very ancient practice, it would be an omission not to take notice of the council of Jerusalem, mentioned in the 15th chapter of the Acts. That the people were concerned in the transactions of that body, is granted generally by episcopalian divines. Something has been said, indeed, to distinguish between the authoritative act of the Apostles, and the

minutes of the meeting are in the printed journals of the church in Pennsylvania. The principal result, was communicated a few days after, to the meeting in New Brunswick.

concurring act of the lay brethren: and Abp. Potter, in support of this distinction, corrects the common translation, on the authority of some ancient manuscripts, reading (Acts xv. 23,) "elders brethren:" a similar expression, he thinks, to "men brethren," in chapter ii. 29; where the *and* is evidently an interpolation, to suit the idiom of the English language. It does not appear, that our best commentators, either before or since the time of Abp. Potter, have followed his reading. Mills prefers, and Griesbach rejects it. The passage, even with the corrections, amounts to what is pleaded for—the obtaining of the consent of the laity; which must have accompanied the decree of Jerusalem: nothing less being included in the term "multitude," who are said to have "kept silence;" and in that of "the whole church," of whom, as well as of the apostles and elders, it is said, that "it pleased" them to institute the recorded mission. On no other principle than that here affirmed, can there be accounted for many particulars introduced in the apostolic epistles. The matters referred to are subjects, which, on the contrary supposition, were exclusively within the province of the clergy; and not to be acted on by the churches, to whom the epistles are respectively addressed.

If then the matter pleaded for be lawful; the question of the propriety of adopting it ought to be determined by expediency. That it was expedient, is judged, 1st. from its being a natural consequence of the principle of following the church of England, in all the leading points of her doctrine, discipline and

worship. We could not, in any other way, have had a substitute for the parliamentary sanction to legislative acts of power. Such a sanction is pleaded for by Mr. Hooker and others; as rendered proper by the reason of the thing, and the principles of the British constitution. On this very ground, the courts of law of that country have always refused to recognize the canons of 1603, as binding over the laity. So far as they are a declaration of the ancient canon law of the realm, they are held to be binding, like the common law, on the ground of immemorial custom: but such matters as rest only on the determinations of the convocation, have been continually declared, by solemn judgments of the courts, to be not binding on the laity; for the express reason, that they were not represented in the convocation.—2dly. From a doubt of our being able to carry episcopacy in any other way. The prejudices of even some of the members of our own church against the name, and much more against the office of bishop; and, added to this, the outcry which had been made on former occasions, by persons of other denominations, that not spiritual powers only, but civil also were intended; rendered it very uncertain, whether we could accomplish the design, without engaging in the measure such a description of gentlemen, as might give it weight; and show to the world, that nothing inimical either to civil or to religious rights was in contemplation.—3dly. Without the order of laity, permanently making a part of our assemblies, it were much to be apprehended, that the laymen would never be

brought to submit to any of our ecclesiastical laws, in such points as might affect the interests or the convenience of any of them; which, it is evident, might happen in very many cases: for instance, to mention two of the most important—admission to the communion and exclusion from it. And they would have the principles and the practice of England to plead in their favour, as already stated.

In order to show, that the preceding sentiments are not uncommon in the church of England, it will be to the purpose to give the following extract from bishop Warburton's "Alliance of Church and State," p. 197—"There was no absurdity in that custom, which continued during the Saxon government and some time after, which admitted the laity into ecclesiastical synods: there appearing to be much the same reasons for laymen's sitting in convocation, as for churchmen sitting in parliament." On the question to which this relates, it will be pertinent to remark, that since, according to what is held by all protestants, neither clergy nor laity can add to the truths of Scripture, whatever either or both of them may ordain, must fall under the head of discipline.

To what extent lay-interference was carried in the English reformation, may be learned from the following accounts of the historian Fuller. Speaking of the convocation of 1552, under Edward VI. he says—"The true reason, why the king would not intrust the diffusive body of the convocation, with a power to meddle with matters of religion, was a just

jealousie which he had of the ill affection of the major part thereof: who, under the fair rinde of protestant profession, had the rotten core of Romish superstition. It was therefore conceived safer for the king, to relie on the ability and fidelity of some select confidents, cordiall to the cause of religion; than to adventure the same to be discussed and decided by a suspitious convocation. However, this convocation is entitled the parent of those articles of religion (42 in number) which are printed with this preface 'Articuli de quibus in Synodo Londinensi Anno Domini 1552, inter Episcopos et alios eruditos viros convenerat.'"

Afterwards speaking of Poinet's Catechism, Fuller says—"Very few in the convocation ever saw it. But these had formerly (it seems) passed over their power (I should be thankfull to him who would produce the originall instrument thereof) to the select divines appointed by the king, in which sense, they may be said to have done it themselves by their delegates, to whom they had deputed their authority. A case not so clear, but that it occasioned a cavill at the next convocation, in the first of Queen Mary, when the papists, therein assembled, renounced the legality of any such former transactions."

However cautiously Fuller speaks, it is evident, he had no faith in the transmission of the power of the convocation, to the delegates appointed by the king. If the fact could be established, there would remain the question of the right to communicate, without a check, a power exclusively vested in the whole clerical order, as this is said to be. In the con-

troversy between the Romanists and the Protestants, concerning the sanction to the principle of persecution by the 4th Lateran Council in 1225, the defence made, is, that the Pope read the decrees as prepared by himself, and that they were adopted by the council without discussion. It is an insufficient plea; but more specious, than that of an authority claimed for points not only not discussed, but not heard; and resting on a retrospect to the alleged delegation of power, if there should exist the proof of it unknown to Fuller. It is right to contend for the due weight of the clergy, in ecclesiastical proceedings; but when the matter is carried so far, as that without their permission, there shall not be the rejection of corruptions in contrariety to the records on which their commission rests, the claim is extravagant; and tends to the counteracting evil, of a denial of the real rights of their order.

The connexion of this with a pamphlet published in the summer of 1783, by the author, although without his name; in which pamphlet was the first public suggestion, tending to the introduction of the laity into our ecclesiastical councils; induces the taking of this opportunity of declaring, that, after the years which have passed, there does not appear to his mind any cause to retract the leading sentiments of that performance. The necessity urged in it ceased to exist, within a short time after the publication; and therefore, all thoughts of the measure intended to have been founded on it, were laid aside. But had Great Britain dropt the war, yet continued her claims;

as many judicious persons expected would be the case; and as had happened formerly, between Spain and the United Netherlands; it is difficult to perceive, how any thing materially different from what is recommended in that pamphlet, could have continued us as a religious society, in existence.* Soon after the publication of the pamphlet, the author found himself in danger of being involved in a dispute with the clergy of Connecticut; in the name of whom, assembled in convention, their secretary, the Rev. Abraham Jarvis, addressed a letter; complaining of the performance, although doubtless mistaking the object of it. The letter was answered—it is hoped in a friendly manner—and there the matter ended. The same convention, in the address sent by them to the archbishop of York, alluded to the pamphlet, as evidence of a design entertained to set up an episcopacy, on the ground of presbyterial and lay authority. No personal animosity became the result of this misapprehension; and other events have manifested consent in all matters essential to ecclesiastical discipline. Before the author's subsequent visit to England, he knew that his pamphlet had been in the

* It is not to be supposed, that under such circumstances, the non-juring bishops of Scotland, labouring under penal laws, not executed indeed, but to which they were obnoxious, and studying to live in quiet submission to an authority which they did not acknowledge, would have provoked it by the measure in question. It is equally improbable, that any kingdom, the establishment of which was protestant and episcopalian, would have provoked Great Britain by an intercourse with those whom she would have considered as her subjects in rebellion.

hands of the archbishop—not the prelate to whom the convention had addressed their letter—of York, the chair of Canterbury being recently vacated by the decease of Dr. Cornwallis, and the appointment of his successor being not yet known in America. The latter, Abp. Moore, did not express any dissatisfaction with the pamphlet, or with the author on its account; nor has any other English prelate, so far as is known to him. It had been enclosed to Mr. Adams, the American minister, when there was officially sent to him the address of the convention of 1785 to the archbishops and bishops of England, and was by him delivered to the archbishop of Canterbury.*

* The pamphlet, written at a time, when there were few episcopalian pulpits in the United States from which the sound of the Gospel was heard, was to the following effect:

It proposed the combining of the clergy and of representatives of the congregations, in convenient districts, with a representative body of the whole, nearly on the plan subsequently adopted. This ecclesiastical representative was to make a declaration approving of episcopacy, and professing a determination to possess the succession when it could be obtained; but they were to carry the plan into immediate act.

The expedient was sustained by the plea of necessity, and by opinions of various authors of the church of England, acknowledging a valid ministry under circumstances similar to those of the existing case, although less imperious. It was also alleged, that as much as what was now proposed might be seen to be implied, in the ground on which episcopacy rests in the institutions of the church of England, and in the defences of it by her most celebrated divines. Although reference was had to the position of

On the communication from Connecticut, it will not be offensive at the present day, to make the following remarks.

There pervades it the defect, of not distinguishing between the then state of public concerns, and as they stood when the pamphlet was published. Nearly a year, and the acknowledgment of independence had intervened. The intimation in the letter, that the author of the pamphlet regarded episcopacy no further than that for the satisfying of the people, the prospect was to be held out of obtaining it at a future time, would have been wounding to his feelings, had his brethren of Connecticut possessed a knowledge of him. They were, at that time, strangers to one another. The intimated suspicion was then resolved, and is now resolved by him on whom it fell, into a difference of apprehension as to the means of accomplishing the same end.

The writer of the pamphlet, although aware that there are occasions of defending episcopacy against opposite pretensions, entertained the opinion, that the most improper, is when the subject under discussion concerned the episcopal church alone. The members of this church were supposed to have been satisfied with the principles on which they had acted,

the church, that "from the apostles' time, there have been in the church of Christ, the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons;" nothing was said in proof of the fact; because it was not questioned in this church; and because argument to the effect would have been indiscreet, as to be stated above.

and which they still professed. To have involved the merits of those principles with the object in view, would have given a plausible pretence for the interference of those who might be disposed to defeat the measure in contemplation.

It is difficult, in avoiding one extreme, not to fall under the appearance of its opposite. Many years after the publication of the pamphlet, a clergyman of standing in an anti-episcopalian society, alleged some passages of the performance as sustaining ordination not episcopal. But he had the candour publicly to acknowledge his mistake, when it was pointed out to him.

For the communication from the clergy of Connecticut, see Appendix No. 3.

It is no slight instance of the proneness to govern too much, and of the peculiar liability to the error in a collective body, that during the war of the revolution, the legislature of Maryland, although consisting of men of various denominations, took up the subject of organizing the church, and particularly of appointing ordainers to the ministry. A clergyman of weight of character—the Rev. Samuel Keene—actuated by laudable ardour, repaired to Annapolis, was heard before the house, and was considered as principally influential in producing an abandonment of the design. Perhaps the hasty enterprize was over-ruled to good: for almost as soon as there became known the happy event of peace, there were held two conventions in Maryland; the first, on the 13th of August, 1783; and the other, on the 22d of June, 1784. The

proceedings of these conventions, with measures taken at other times and in other matters by the clergy of that state, were chiefly originated and conducted by the Rev. Dr. Smith; who, in his residence there, during the seizure of the charter rights of the college of Philadelphia, exerted his excellent talents in these and in other public works.

The principal business of the convention in August 1783, was the making of "A declaration of certain fundamental rights and liberties of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Maryland," consisting of the following articles.

1st. We consider it as the undoubted right of the said Protestant Episcopal Church, in common with other Christian churches under the American revolution, to complete and preserve herself as an entire church, agreeably to her ancient usages and professions; and to have a full enjoyment and free exercise of those purely spiritual powers, which are essential to the being of every church or congregation of the faithful; and which, being derived from Christ and his apostles, are to be maintained independent of every foreign or other jurisdiction; so far as may be consistent with the civil rights of society.

2d. That ever since the reformation, it hath been the received doctrine of the church of which we are members, (and which, by the constitution of this state, is entitled to a perpetual enjoyment of certain property and rights, under the denomination of the Church of England.) "That there be three orders of ministers in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and

deacons;" and, that an episcopal ordination and commission are necessary to the valid administration of the sacraments, and the due exercise of the ministerial function, in the said church.

3d. That without calling in question the rights, modes and forms of any other Christian churches or societies, or wishing the least contest with them on that subject, we consider and declare it to be an essential right of the said Protestant Episcopal Church, to have and enjoy the continuance of the said three orders of ministers for ever, so far as concerns matters purely spiritual; and that no persons, in the character of ministers, except such as are in the communion of the said church, and duly called to the ministry by regular episcopal ordination, can or ought to be admitted into or enjoy any of the churches, chapels, glebes, or other property, formerly belonging to the church of England in this state; and which, by the constitution and form of government, is secured to the said church for ever; by whatsoever name she, the said church, or her superior order of ministers, may in future be denominated.

4th. That as it is the right, so it will be the duty of the said church, when duly organized, constituted, and represented in a synod or convention of the different orders of her ministers and people, to revise her liturgy, forms of prayer, and public worship; in order to adapt the same to the late revolution, and other local circumstances of America; which, it is humbly conceived, will and may be done, without

any other or farther departure from the venerable order and beautiful forms of worship of the church from which we sprung, than may be found expedient in the change of our situation, from a daughter to a sister church.

In the convention of June 1784, which included lay-deputies from the different parishes, the aforesaid declaration was again approved; and certain fundamental principles of ecclesiastical government were established; of which the following is recorded on the printed journal as the substance.

1. That none of the orders of the clergy, whether bishops, priests, or deacons, who may be under the necessity of obtaining ordination in any foreign state, with a view to officiate or settle in this state, shall, at the time of their ordination, or at any time afterwards, take or subscribe any obligation of obedience, civil or canonical, to any foreign power or authority whatsoever, nor be admissible into the ministry of this church, if such obligations have been taken for a settlement in any foreign country, without renouncing the same; by taking the oaths required by law, as a test of allegiance to this state.

2. According to what we conceive to be of true apostolic institution, the duty and office of a bishop differs in nothing from that of other priests, except in the power of ordination and confirmation; and in the right of precedency in ecclesiastical meetings or synods; and shall accordingly be so exercised in this church; the duty and office of priests and deacons remaining as heretofore. And if any further dis-

tinctions and regulations, in the different orders of the ministry, should be found necessary for the good government of the church; the same shall be made and established by the joint voice and authority of a representative body of the clergy and laity, at future ecclesiastical synods or conventions.

3. The third section, is intended to define or discriminate some of the separate rights and powers of the clergy, and was proposed and agreed to as follows; viz. that the clergy shall be deemed adequate judges of the ministerial commission and authority, which is necessary to the due administration of the ordinances of religion in their own church; and of the literary, moral, and religious qualifications and abilities of persons to be nominated and appointed to the different orders of the ministry; but the approving and receiving such persons to any particular cure, duty, or parish, when so nominated, appointed, set apart, consecrated and ordained, is in the people, who are to support them, and to receive the benefit of their ministry.

4. The fourth section provides, that ecclesiastical conventions or synods of this church shall consist of the clergy, and one lay-delegate or representative from each vestry or parish, or a majority of the same; and shall be held annually on the fourth Tuesday of October, unless some canon or rule should be made at some future convention for altering the time of meeting, or for meeting oftener than once a year, or not so often, or with a larger or smaller representation of the church, as may be judged necessary. But

fundamental rules, once duly made, shall not be altered; unless two thirds of such majority, as aforesaid, duly assembled, shall agree therein.

The following heads of additional articles, were set down for the consideration of the next convention.

1. That the power and authority necessary for reclaiming or excluding scandalous members, whether lay or clerical, and all jurisdiction with regard to offenders, be exercised only by a representative body of clergy and laity jointly.

2. That the power of suspending or dismissing clergymen from the exercise of their ministry, in any particular church, parish, or district, be by the like authority.

3. That all canons or laws for church-government, and all alterations, changes, and reforms, in the church service and liturgy, or in points of doctrine to be professed and taught in the church, shall also be by the like authority.

The proceedings of these conventions, besides the circumstance of their showing an accommodation to the civil system, by the introduction of the laity, gave great offence to some of the clergy, by the definition of the authority of a bishop, in the second of the articles established. It is, evidently, the much controverted position of St. Jerome. The author does not think it accurate: and although his principles on the subject of episcopacy allow of an accommodation of its powers to the circumstances of the church, at different times; he was afraid of

there arising some inconvenience from the asserting, as a fundamental principle, of what was in the opposite extreme to that of the overstrained authorities of the office, maintained by others.

In consequence of the recommendation and proposal of the meeting of 1784 in New York, there was a convention of the clergy of South Carolina, at Charleston, in the spring of 1785. This was the state, in which there was the most to be apprehended an opposition to the very principle of episcopacy; from its being connected, in the minds of some people, with the idea of an attachment to the British government. The citizens of South Carolina were the last visited by the British armies; and had suffered more than any others, by their ravages. The truth is, there was real danger of an opposition in the convention, to a compliance with the invitation given. But the danger was warded off, by a proposal made by the Rev. Robert Smith, to accompany their compliance with the measure, by its being understood, that there was to be no bishop settled in that state. Such a proposal, from the gentleman who, it was presumed, would be the bishop, were there to be any chosen, had the effect intended. Some gentlemen, it is said, declared in conversation, that they had contemplated an opposition; but were prevented by this caution.

Besides the conventions which have been mentioned, there were one in New York, and another in New Jersey, in the summer of 1785. But as their proceedings extended no further, than to the appoint-

ing of deputies to the general convention; it is not necessary to notice them any further, than is dictated by this circumstance.

F. Page 15. *Of the General Convention, in Philadelphia, in September and October,* 1785.

The president of this convention was Dr. White, and the secretary was the Rev. Dr. Griffith.

There being journals of this convention, and of the conventions following, the matter of those journals will not be repeated in this work; except so far as may be thought necessary to the sense of it: the design being principally the communicating of facts within the knowledge and the recollection of the narrator, tending to throw light on what has been recorded. The statements and the remarks to be now offered, will be arranged under the heads of sundry sections.

Section I. *Of the general Ecclesiastical Constitution.*

It has been seen, that in the preceding year, at New York, a few general principles, tending to the organizing of the church, had been recommended to the churches represented, and proposed to those not represented. As all the articles, except the fourth, which recognized the English liturgy, with the exception of the political parts of it, were adopted by the present convention, they became a bond of union; and indeed, the only one acted under until the year

1789. For as to the general constitution, framed at the period now before us, it stood on recommendation only; and was of no use, except in helping to convince those who were attached to that mode of transacting business, that it was very idle to bring gentlemen together from different states, for the purpose of such inconclusive proceedings.

The fifth and the eighth articles of this proposed constitution, deserve particular notice; because they have been subjects of considerable conversation and censure.

The former of these articles provided, that every bishop should be a member of the convention "*ex officio.*" Accordingly, the article was loudly objected to by the clergy to the eastward; because of its not providing for episcopal presidency.

The constitution was drafted by the author, in a sub-committee; a part of a general committee, consisting of a clergyman and a layman from each state; and originally provided, that a bishop, if any were present, should preside. In the sub-committee, a gentleman, without much consideration of the subject, and contrary to what his good sense, with such an advantage, would have dictated, objected to the clause; and insisted, that he had read, although he could not recollect in what book, that this had not been a prerogative of bishops in ancient ecclesiastical assemblies. The objection was over-ruled, by all the other members of the sub-committee. But when the instrument, after passing in the general committee, was brought into the convention; the

same gentleman, not expecting to succeed, and merely, as he afterwards said, to be consistent, made a motion to strike out the clause. Contrary to expectation, he was supported by another lay-gentleman, who took an active part in all the measures; and who, in the sub-committee, had been of another mind. Thus a debate was brought on, which produced more heat than any thing else, that happened during the session. As the voting was by orders, the clergy, who, with the exception of one gentleman, were for the clause, might have quashed the whole article. But this appeared to them to be wrong; because it contained nothing contrary to the principle of episcopal presidency; and the general object was such, as ought to have been provided for. Accordingly, the article passed, as it stands on the journal: that is, with silence as to the point in question. It was considered, that practice might settle what had better be provided for by law; and that even such provision might be the result of a more mature consideration of the subject. The latter expectation was justified by the event.

The other article provided, that every clergyman should be amenable to the convention of the state to which he should belong. This was objected to by the English bishops, as appears in the letter of the archbishops of Canterbury and York; who there complain, that it is "a degradation of the clerical, and much more of the episcopal character." The foundation of this complaint, like that of the other, was rather in omission, than in any thing positively

declared. For the bishop's being amenable to the convention in the state to which he belonged, does not necessarily involve any thing more, than that he should be triable by laws of their enacting, himself being a part of the body: and it did not follow, that he might be deposed or censured, either by laymen or by presbyters. This, however, ought to have been guarded against: but to have attempted it, while the convention were in the temper excited by the altercations concerning the fifth article, would have been to no purpose.

In this whole business, there was encountered a prejudice entertained by many of the clergy in other states; who thought, that nothing should have been done towards the organizing of the church, until the obtaining of the episcopacy. This had been much insisted on, in the preceding year, in New York. Let us—it was said—first have an head; and then let us proceed to regulate the body. It was answered, on that occasion—let us gather the scattered limbs; and then, let the head be superadded. Certainly, the different episcopalian congregations knew of no union before the revolution; except what was the result of the connexion which they in common had with the bishop of London. The authority of that bishop being withdrawn, what right had the episcopalians in any state, or in any one part of it, to choose a bishop for those in any other? And until an union were effected, what is there in Christianity generally, or in the principles of this church in particular, to hinder them from taking different courses in different places,

as to all things not necessary to salvation? Which might have produced different liturgies, different articles, episcopacy from different sources, and in short, very many churches, instead of one extending over the United States; and that, without any ground for the charge of schism, or of the invasion of one anothers' rights. The course taken, has embraced all the different congregations. It is far from being certain, that the same event would have been produced, by any other plan that might have been devised. For instance, let it be supposed, that in any district of Connecticut, the clergy and the people, not satisfied with the choice made of Bishop Seabury, or with the contemplated plan of settlement, had acted for themselves, instead of joining with their brethren. It would be impossible to prove the unlawfulness of such a scheme; or, until an organization were made, that the minor part were bound to submit to the will of the majority. There was no likelihood of such an indiscreet proceeding, in Connecticut. But in some other departments which might be named, it would not have been surprizing. Let it be remarked, that in the preceding hypothesis, there is supposed to have been, in the different neighbourhoods, a bond of union not dissolved by the revolution. This sentiment is congenial with Christianity itself, and with Christian discipline in the beginning: the connexion not existing congregationally; but, in every instance, without dependence on the houses, in which the worship of the different portions of the aggregate body may be carried on.

Section II. *Of the Measures taken to Obtain the Episcopacy.*

The expression should be noticed, on account of the pretence made by some, that the episcopal church in the United States begun with its obtaining of the episcopacy. According to this notion, where dioceses exist independently on one another, as was the condition of all Christendom for a long time after the preaching of the apostles, on the decease of every bishop, his church became extinct. A new name, does not characterize the church as new, but may arise from civil changes in various ways to be conceived of. What was called formerly "the Church of England in America," did not cease to exist on the removal of the episcopacy of the bishop of London, by the providence of God; but assumed a new name, as the dictate of propriety.

It may be matter of surprise, that, after the clamor made but a few years before this period, on the proposal of an American episcopacy; and considering the fashion of objecting to it prevailing even among a considerable proportion of our own communion; there should now be a unanimous application for it, from a fair representative of the church in seven states of the union; the lay part consisting principally of gentlemen, who had been active in the late revolution; and made under circumstances, which required the consent of the very power we had been

at war with.* The truth is, that if there existed any inclination to object—and there is no certainty of the contrary—it was prevented by what is to be related.

A few months before the present period, bishop Seabury had arrived in Connecticut, with consecration from the non-juring bishops of Scotland. The clergy in that state, not liking the complexion of the measures taken for the calling of a general convention, wrote to several of the southern clergy, inviting them to a convention, to be held in the summer at New Haven. What answer they received from others, is not here known: but that of Philadelphia thanked them for their invitation; congratulated bishop Seabury on his arrival; apologized for the not coming, by the expectation of the convention in September; and invited the clergy of Connecticut to attend the latter

When the time of the convention in Philadelphia drew near, Bishop Seabury wrote to Dr. Smith, then living in Maryland, a letter which he enclosed under cover to Dr. Chandler of Elizabeth-Town; who sent it, in like manner, to the author; desiring him to read, and then forward it to Dr. Smith. In this letter, a copy of which the author has now before him, Bp. Seabury, besides objecting to sundry of the measures

* In evidence of the unanimity, there is in possession of the author, the original instrument, signed by all the clerical and all the lay members who gave attendance on the business of the convention.

taken in the southern states, declared himself in very strong terms, against the admission of the laity into ecclesiastical councils; and indeed against that of presbyters also, except into the diocesan. For although his expressions are, that they were not admitted into general councils, and this is very indefinite; yet it would seem from the connexion, that he disapproved of submitting the general concerns of the American church to any other than bishops. It is the arrangement of the church, in which Bishop Seabury received his episcopacy.

This letter, which, agreeably to a desire expressed in it, was laid before the convention, produced some animadversions. A few of the laygentlemen, spoke more warmly than the occasion seemed to justify; considering, that the letter appeared to contain the honest sentiments of the writer, delivered in inoffensive terms. It was addressed to a gentleman, who had long lived in habits of acquaintance with the writer. And as for its being designed for the hearing of the body then assembled; it should have been remembered, that the clergy of Connecticut had been invited to the meeting, by those at whose desire they had appeared themselves. On this ground, they were answered by some of the clergy—particularly by Dr. Andrews.

For the letter, see Appendix No. 4.

It naturally happened in regard to any apprehensions entertained of an excessive hierarchy, that they influenced to the very application to England, which had formerly, from the very same cause, been con-

templated with jealousy. It was generally understood, that the door was open to consecration in Scotland; or at least, that if there should be any impediment, it must arise from some particulars, which had been thought too republican by many. That the clergy unanimously, and that a very great body of the laity would adhere to episcopacy, was well known: and therefore, how natural the recourse to a quarter, in which it was thought there would be less stifness, on the points objected to by Bishop Seabury! it may be added—in which the political principles obtaining, although monarchical, were not such as favoured arbitrary power. It ought to be understood, that this is the supposed strain of reasoning of a few only. The majority of the convention certainly thought it a matter of choice, and even required by decency, to apply in the first instance, to the church of which the American had been till now a part. No doubt, the sentiment was strengthened by the general disapprobation entertained in America, of the prejudices which, in the year 1688, in Scotland, had deprived the episcopal church of her establishment; and had kept her, ever since, in hostility to the family on the throne. As to Bishop Seabury's failure in England, the causes of it, as stated in his letter, seemed to point out a way of obviating the difficulty in the present case. The same causes had been, with no considerable variety, stated to the author in a letter from the Rev. Dr. Murray, formerly of Reading in this state; who declared his full conviction, that a proper application, from such a body as

was in contemplation, that is the present convention, of whose intended meeting he had been informed, would be followed by success. As the Doctor was supposed to have conversed with leading characters on the subject, which was found afterwards to have been the case, his letter had great weight in encouraging the measure.

So it was, then, that the projected application found no opposition. The duty of proposing a mode of application was added to the other duties, of the general committee which had been appointed. As one of a sub-committee, the author drafted the resolves and the address, as they stand on the journals, with the exception of a few verbal alterations. Thus, a foundation was laid, for the procuring of the present episcopacy. It was a prudent provision of the convention, to instruct the deputies from the respective states, to apply to the civil authorities existing in them respectively, for their sanction of the measure; in order to avoid one of the impediments, which had stood in the way of Bishop Seabury. The address above alluded to, which was the first step in the correspondence with the English prelates, is in the Appendix No. 5.

The episcopalian public may be supposed to be satisfied, that the course taken was the best, in every point of view; and that it can never suffer by a comparison with any other mode, which might have been pursued. To have abandoned the episcopal succession, would have been in opposition to primitive order and ancient habits; and besides, would at least

have divided the church. To have had recourse to Scotland, independently on the objections entertained against the political principles of the non-jurors of that country, would not have been proper, without previous disappointment on a request made to the mother church. Another resource remained, in foreign ordination; which had been made the easier by the act of the British parliament, passed in the preceding year, to enable the bishop of London to ordain citizens or subjects of foreign countries, without exacting the usual oaths. But, besides that this would have kept the church under the same hardships which had heretofore existed, and had been so long complained of; dependence on a foreign country in spirituals, when there had taken place independence in temporals, is what no prudent person would have pleaded for.

Section III. *Of the Alterations in the Book of Common Prayer.*

When the members of the convention first came together; very few, or rather, it is believed, none of them entertained thoughts of altering the liturgy, any further than to accommodate it to the revolution. There being no express authority to the purpose, the contrary was implied in the sending of deputies, on the ground of the recommendation and proposal from New York, which presumed that the book, with the above exception, should remain entire. The only church to which this remark does not apply, is that of Virginia; which authorized its deputies

to join in a review, liable however to a rejection by their own convention. Every one, so far as is here known, wished for alterations in the different offices. But it was thought, at New York in the preceding year, that such an enterprize could not be undertaken, until the church should be consolidated and organized. Perhaps it would have been better, if the same opinion had been continued and acted on.

But it happened otherwise. Some of the members hesitated at making the book so permanent, as it would have been by the fourth article of the recommendatory instrument. Arguments were held in favour of a review, from change of language, and from the notorious fact, that there were some matters universally held exceptionable, independently on doctrine. A moderate review, fell in with the sentiments and the wishes of every member. Added to all this, there gained ground a confident persuasion, that the general mind of the communion would be so gratified by it, as that acquiescence might be confidently expected. On these considerations, the matter was undertaken.

The alterations were prepared by another subdivision of the general committee, than that to which the author belonged. When brought into the committee, they were not reconsidered; because the ground would have been to go over again in the convention. Accordingly, he cannot give an account of any arguments, arising in the preparatory stage of the business. Even in the convention, there were

but few points canvassed, with any material difference of principle; and those only shall be noticed.

The first controversy of this description was introduced, on a motion made by the Hon. Mr. Page of Virginia, since governor of that state, to leave out the first four petitions of the litany, and, instead of them, to introduce a short petition which he had drawn up, more agreeable to his ideas of the divine Persons, recognized in those petitions. The mover declared, that he had no objection to the invoking of our blessed Saviour, whose divinity the prayer acknowledged; and whom he considered as invoked through the whole of the liturgy; which, he thought, might be defended by scripture. The objection lay to the word "Trinity," which he remarked to be unauthorised by scripture, and a foundation of much unnecessary disputation. But he said, that the leaving out of the fourth petition only, in which only the word occurred, would leave the other petitions liable to the charge of acknowledging three Gods; and therefore, he moved to strike out the whole. The Rev. Dr. West of Baltimore answered Mr. Page, in a speech in which the Doctor appeared to be in great agitation; partly because, as he said, he was unused to unprepared speaking; but evidently the more so, from his apprehensions arising from what he supposed to be the signal for aiming at very hazardous and essential alterations. Perhaps much more would have been said: but during Dr. West's speech, it was whispered about, that there was really no use in going into such a controversy; that Mr. Page had made the

motion, merely to preserve consistency of conduct, that he had attempted the same thing in the sub-committee, and well knew from what had passed, that there was no prospect of success; but that he could not dispense with the bringing of the question before the body. Accordingly, as soon as Dr. West had finished, it was put and lost without a division.*

The next material question, to the best of the recollection retained, was on a motion for framing a service for the 4th of July. This was the most injudicious step taken by the convention. Might they not have foreseen, that every clergyman, whose political principles interfered with the appointment, would be under a strong temptation to cry down the intended book, if it were only to get rid of the offensive holiday? Besides this point of prudence, was it not the dictate of moderation, to avoid the introducing of extraneous matter of difference of opinion, in a church that was to be built up? Especially, when there was in contemplation the moderating of religious tests, was it consistent to introduce a political one? It was said, that the revolution being now accomplished, all the clergy ought, as good citizens, to conform to it; and to uphold, as far as their influence

* In a controversy since moved in Boston, Bishop Provoost has been named, as having endeavoured to accomplish the omission of the acknowledgment of the Trinity. It is not true: and the error may be supposed to have arisen from what has been related of the effort of Mr. Page. There have been various misrepresentations of the matter; which have made it the more necessary to state the fact.

extended, the civil system which had been established. Had the question been concerning the praying for the prosperity of the commonwealths, and for the persons of those who rule in them, the argument would have been conclusive: and indeed, this had been done by all the remaining clergy; however disaffected they might have been, throughout the war. But, the argument did not apply to a retrospective approbation of the origin of the civil constitutions; or rather, to a profession of such approbation, contrary to known fact.

This was one of the few occasions, on which the author used the privilege reserved by him on his acceptance of the presidency, to deliver his opinion. To his great surprize, there was but one gentleman —and he a professed friend to American independence—who spoke on the same side of the question; and there were very few, if any, who voted with the two speakers against the measure. Bodies of men are more apt than individuals, to calculate on an implicit submission to their determinations. The present was a striking instance of the remark. The members of the convention, seem to have thought themselves so established in their station of ecclesiastical legislators, that they might expect of the many clergy who had been averse to the American revolution, the adoption of this service; although, by the use of it, they must make an implied acknowledgment of their error, in an address to Almighty God. What must further seem not a little extraordinary, the service was principally arranged and the prayer

alluded to was composed, by a reverend gentleman, (Dr. Smith) who had written and acted against the declaration of independence; and was unfavourably looked on by the supporters of it, during the whole revolutionary war. His conduct, in the present particular, was different from what might have been expected from his usual discernment: but he doubtless calculated on what the good of the church seemed to him to require, in consequence of a change of circumstances; and he was not aware of the effect which would be produced by the retrospective property of the appointment. The greater stress is laid on this matter, because of the notorious fact, that the majority of the clergy could not have used the service, without subjecting themselves to ridicule and censure. For the author's part, having no hindrance of this sort, he contented himself with having opposed the measure; and kept the day, from respect to the requisition of the convention; but could never hear of its being kept, in above two or three places besides Philadelphia. He is thus particular, in recording the incidents attached to the matter stated, with the hope of rendering it a caution to ecclesiastical bodies, to avoid that danger into which human nature is so apt to fall, of governing too much.

On the subject of the articles, a dispute arose in regard to the article on justification: not as it was at last agreed on, but as it was proposed by the subcommittee. The objection was urged principally by the secretary of the convention—the Rev. Dr. Griffith—and by the author. The proposed article was

at last withdrawn; and the words of the thirty-nine articles, on that subject, were restored. In this, there is certainly no superaddition to what is held generally by divines of the church of England. As to the substitute proposed, the objection made to it, was its being liable to a construction contrary to the great evangelical truth, that salvation is of grace. It would have been a forced construction, but not to be disregarded. Some wished to get rid of the new article introduced concerning predestination, without stating any thing in its place This, it is probable, would have been better than the proposed article; which professes to say something on the subject, yet in reality says nothing. But many gentlemen were of opinion, that the subject was not to be passed over in silence altogether; and therefore consented to the article on predestination, as it stands on the proposed book. The opinion of the author was, that the article should be accommodated, not to individual condition, and to everlasting reward and punishment; but to national designation, and to a state of covenant with God in the present life. Although this is a view of the subject still entertained by him; yet he has been since convinced, that the introducing of it as an article would have endangered needless controversy, on the meanings of the terms predestination and election, as used in the New Testament. If we cannot do away the ground of controversy heretofore laid; it at least becomes us, to avoid the furnishing of new matter for the excitement of it. As to the article in the proposed book; although no one pro-

fessed scruples against what is there affirmed, yet there seemed a difficulty in discovering for what purpose it was introduced. The author never met with any who were satisfied with it.

On the subject of original sin, an incident occurred, strongly marking the propensity already noticed, unwarily to make private opinion the standard of public faith. The sub-committee had introduced into this article the much controverted passage, in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, beginning at the 9th verse; and they had applied it as descriptive of the Christian state. The construction is exacted by a theory, than which nothing was further from that of the gentleman (Dr. Smith) who would have bound this sense of the passage on the church. The interpretation generally given by divines of the church of England, makes the words descriptive of man's unregenerate state; in which there is a struggle between nature and grace, to the extent of the terms made use of in Scripture. This seems necessary to a conformity with the Christian character, as drawn in innumerable places. It was on a proposal of the author, that the article was altered in this particular; although the gentleman who had drafted it not only earnestly contended for his construction of the text, but could not be made sensible of the danger which would have resulted from the establishing of that construction, as a test to every candidate for orders.

Less prominent debates on the subject of the articles, are not here noticed. Whatever is novel in them, was taken from a book in the possession of

the Rev. Dr. Smith. The book was anonymous; and was one of the publications which have abounded n England, projecting changes in the established articles.

On this business of the review of the Book of Common Prayer and of the Articles, the convention seem to have fallen into two capital errors, independently on the merits of the alterations themselves. The first error, was the ordering of the printing of a large edition of the book; which did not well consist with the principle of mere proposal. Perhaps much of the opposition to it arose from this very thing; which seemed a stretch of power, designed to effect the introduction of the book to actual use, in order to prevent a discussion of its merits. The other error, was the ordering of the use of it in Christ church, Philadelphia; on the occasion of Dr. Smith's sermon, at the conclusion of the session of the convention. This helped to confirm the opinion, of its being to be introduced with an high hand, and subjected the clergy of Philadelphia to extraordinary difficulty: for they continued the use of the liturgy, agreeably to the alterations, on assurances given by many gentlemen, that they would begin it in their respective churches, immediately on their return. This the greater number of them never did: and there are known instances, in each of which the stipulation was shrunk back from, because some influential member of a congregation was dissatisfied with some one of the alterations. This is a fact

which shows very strongly, how much weight of character is necessary to such changes as may be thought questionable.

Section IV. *Of sundry Measures and Events, connected with the Acts of the Convention of* 1785.

The first particular claiming attention under this head, is the publication of the Book of Common Prayer; that is, of the edition which has received the name of the proposed book.

Dr. Smith, Dr. Wharton, and the author, who were appointed to this service, gave their application to it without delay. But here, unexpected difficulties occurred; which are taken notice of, principally with the view of guarding against the like, in future ecclesiastical proceedings.

The committee had been authorized to make verbal alterations; but were restrained from departing, either in form or in substance, from what had been agreed on. Setting aside the questions arising on this distinction; the imperfections evidently remaining on some points by reason of haste, and which would have been remedied had they been attended to, and added to this, the importunities of some of the clergy, who pressed the committee to extend their powers pretty far, in full confidence that the liberty would be acceptable to all, were such, that in the end, they were drawn on to take a greater latitude, than ought to be allowed in such a work.

Besides discretion as to verbal alterations, the committee were fully empowered on the subject of the tables, and on that of the selection of reading psalms. The author's proposal, was to take whole psalms; selecting such as fall in with the general subjects of divine worship; and leaving the officiating minister to his choice, among those which should be selected. But the other members of the committee were of opinion, that as much should be retained as could not well be objected to, on the score of being unsuitable parts of Christian prayer and praise. The consequence of this, was a charge of having treated Scripture irreverently, by the leaving out of particular passages, on the principle of their being offensive. Although the omissions were not made on that ground; because it is not every part of Scripture, that can be introduced into the exercise of devotion; yet there would apparently have been less colour for the censure, on the other plan of the selection of entire psalms. The author has been since convinced, that instead of a selection of psalms in any shape, a better way would have been to print the psalter entire; and to leave every officiating minister to his choice, from time to time. This would have less interfered with the ideas of those, who, on account of the sublime spirit of devotion running through the whole body of the psalms, were averse to the parting with any proportion of them from the service of the church. For although, according to the idea here suggested, it would have been impossible to have gratified every individual under the proposed alter-

native; yet, there might have been taken which ever side of it was the most likely to be satisfactory.

It has been painful to the author, that he has found himself opposed in opinion to that of some of his brethren, whose views of the subject have the appearance of being opened to them by the sentiment of devotion. Yet, he cannot perceive the propriety of putting into the mouths of a whole congregation devotions expressive of peculiar states of mind; and such as are not likely to be applicable to many persons in an ordinary assembly: for instance, strains expressive of the highest exultation; and other strains, expressive of the lowest depths of sorrow. He is aware of what is argued in favour of this, from the sentiment of Christian sympathy; by which every member of a church may enter into feelings, which are otherwise not his own; but which he may reasonably suppose to belong to some, who are fellow-members of the body. The author respects the plea; but cannot bring it within the sphere of his own ideas of the precept, to "pray with the understanding." He has heard of another argument for the practice. It is the use of impressing the whole of those excellent compositions, on the memories of all the members of the church. But on this plan it would seem, that Scripture would be honoured still more, if, from Genesis to Revelation, it were embodied with the service. This, however, could not have been the object of the introduction of the psalms. There have been urged testimonies from the fathers, demonstrative of the great use of these compositions in the early ages of the

church; and its not being recorded of any particular psalms, to the exclusion of the rest. No: the whole body of them may have been a fund of devotion; consistently with choice made, as subject and as circumstances might dictate. He has not yet found evidence, that in the primitive church, as in the church of England, the book was gone through in a routine of successive portions. Although these are his opinions, yet he laments the extent of the innovation, made at the period referred to; because he believes, that the aiming at so much prevented what might have been done more effectually; and brought into universal use, by allowance of the discretion which has been pleaded for.

Under the foregoing head, there has been noticed what is here thought a great error in the convention —the printing of the book, without waiting for the reception of the alterations, and their being in use. A subordinate error, accompanying the other, was the endeavouring to raise a profit from the book, although for a charitable purpose. It had two bad consequences; that of exciting the supposition, that the books were made the dearer—although, in reality, this was not the fact; and that of inducing the committee to send them to the clergy, in the different parts of the continent; confiding in their exertions, for the benevolent purpose declared. Several of the clergy again entrusted them to persons, from whom they got no returns. Hence it happened, that when the expenses of the edition were paid, there was not so much left for the charity, as to be an adequate

consideration for such an undertaking. The committee were at last obliged to relinquish the design, of saving for the charity the usual profit of the booksellers; who, on that change of plan, made rapid sales of them.

Another bad effect of the publication was, that the English prelates were not furnished with an account of the alterations, so soon as they should have been, considering the application that had come before them. For the committee, having had good reason to believe that the impression would go on rapidly, had not furnished a copy of the instrument containing the alterations. Their waiting first for paper from the mills, and then, for one interfering object and another occurring to the printer, brought to spring before the edition was out. It is true, that the sheets were sent by parcels during the progress. None however arrived, before the answer to the address was sent: and this inattention—or what seemed such—the bishops could not account for; as the archbishop afterwards distantly intimated to those who received consecration in England. Hence arose the caution, with which the convention were answered by the right reverend bench; a caution evidently to be discerned, in their letter of the 24th of February 1786. For some of the clergy in the eastern states, from what is here supposed to have been mistaken zeal, had been very early in conveying to their clerical acquaintance in England, an unfavourable representation of the spirit of the proceedings: a fact, which is glanced at in the same letter. Although the im-

pression, thus produced, was so far done away on the arrival of the book, as that there remained no radical impediment to the gratification of the church, in granting her request made; which must be evident to every one who reads their subsequent letter; yet it follows from this narrative, that their misapprehension would have been obviated, if the printing had been confined to the list of the proposed alterations.

For the letter of the English prelates, see Appendix No. 6.

From the letter of their lordships it appears, that the omission of the Article of Christ's descent into Hell, in the Apostles' Creed, was the thing principally faulted. It was the objection made by Dr. Moss, bishop of Bath and Wells, that swayed in this matter. A gentleman who had been a member of the convention—Richard Peters, Esq.—happening to visit England a few months after, and having waited on the archbishop at the request of the committee, the said bishop expressed a wish to see him; and, in the consequent interview, declared very strongly his disapprobation of that alteration. It was learned afterwards in England, from Dr. Watson, bishop of Landaff, that the objection came principally from the quarter here noticed. Indeed he expressed himself in such a manner, as led to the conclusion, that the bishop of Bath and Wells only was the objector. No doubt, the bishops, generally, must have approved of the objection; considering their concurring in the strong protest that came from them, on the subject of the omitted article. However, from the dif-

ferent particulars attending the transaction, the author is disposed to believe, that, had it not been for the above-mentioned circumstance, they would hardly have started their objection to the omission in such a manner, as carries the appearance of their making of a restoration of the clause, a condition of their compliance with the request. As to the bishop of Landaff, he plainly said, speaking on the merits of the subject, that he knew not of any scriptural authority for the article, unless it were the passage in St. Peter (meaning 1. iii. 19, 20.) And this he said must be acknowledged a passage considerably involved in obscurity. To the two bishops who went for consecration it was very evident, that the bishop of Landaff was far from being attached to the objection, in which he had concurred. It is probable, that the same may have been true of many others of the bench. But when the matter was pressed by a very venerable bishop, eminent as well for his theological learning as for an exemplary life and conversation, and rested by him on the ground of the contradiction of an ancient heresy, it must have been difficult in the body to wave the objection, considering the novel line in which they were acting; and their inability, in a corporate capacity, to act at all.

Section V. *Of Proceedings of Conventions in the States, subsequent to those of the General Convention.*

For a while, there was felt the evil of the mistake made in the beginning, of not forwarding copies of

the alterations; a mistake, less to be imputed to the committee, than to the convention, who had given no order on the subject; but who, perhaps, presumed on the editing of the book, before the other conventions could be held. They were held in the months of May and June 1786; very soon after the arrival of the letter of the bishops. In New York, the question of ratifying the Book of Common Prayer was kept under consideration. In New Jersey they rejected it, expressing at the same time their approbation of the other proceedings of the convention, except of the constitution. In Pennsylvania, some amendments were proposed. The same was done in Maryland. No convention met in Delaware. In Virginia, it was adopted, with the exception of one of the rubrics, and with some proposed amendments of the articles; many dissenting from such adoption; not, as the author was well informed, because of the alterations made, but because they were so few. It is strange to tell, that the rubric, held to be intolerable in Virginia, was that allowing the minister to repel an evil liver from the communion. The author, some time after, held serious argument on the point, with a gentleman who had been influential in the state convention. The offensive matter was not the precise provisions of the rubric, but that there should be any provision of the kind, or power exercised to the end contemplated. In South Carolina, the Book was received without limitation. On the whole it was evident, that, in regard to the Liturgy, the labours of the convention had not reached their object. It did

not appear, that the constitution was objected to in any state, except in that of New Jersey. The propriety of the application to the English bishops, was not contradicted any where, except in South Carolina: and even in this state, there was carried an acquiescence in it. Under the circumstances stated, the convention to be held in June 1786 was looked forward to, as what would either remedy the difficulty, or increase it.

There has been given an account of the proceedings of sundry conventions in the different states, prior to the meeting in New Brunswick in May 1784. At that period, no convention had assembled in Virginia. But in May 1785, there was one in the city of Richmond; of the proceedings of which there shall be here given a general account; for the same reason as in reference to the proceedings for the organization of the other churches, comprehended within the union.

There had been previously passed, in the year 1784, an act of the legislature, incorporating the episcopal church in the respective parishes individually, and as existing throughout the state: that is, not only in each parish, the minister and vestrymen chosen by the members of the church were a body corporate for their own appropriate church and glebe; but the act recognized a convention consisting of the settled ministers and deputies from the different vestries, competent to self-government. In this act, there was no vestige of the former establishment: on the contrary, it contained provisos, guarding against all

claims tending to that point. Nevertheless, the current set so strong against the episcopal church, from the enmity of numerous professors of religion, not a little aided by opinions inimical equally to the church and to the societies dissenting from her, that in the year 1786 the law was repealed, with a proviso saving to all religious societies the estates belonging to them respectively. In the year 1798, this statute also was repealed, as inconsistent with religious freedom.*

In this convention, the recommendations passed in New York, in October of the preceding year, were adopted with two exceptions. They refused the acceptance of the fourth, concerning the liturgy, until it should be revised at the expected meeting in Philadelphia; and in respect to the sixth article determining the manner of voting, they objected to it as a fundamental article of the constitution; but acquiesced in it as regarded the ensuing convention, reserving a right to approve or disapprove of its proceedings.

Their opinions as to the principles which should govern in the proceedings were detailed in instruc-

* A law, substantially the same as that of 1784, so far as it incorporated the church throughout the state, was passed by the legislature of Maryland in the year 1802, in favour of the Roman Catholics: which does not appear to have given offence, or to have been productive of bad effects; although the like favor has been refused to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the same state.

tion to deputies appointed by them to the general convention, and are as follows:

"Gentlemen, during your representation of the Protestant Episcopal Church, we commend to your observance the following sentiments concerning doctrine and worship. We refer you at the same time, for these and other objects of your mission, to our resolutions on the proceedings of the late convention in New York.

"Uniformity in doctrine and worship will unquestionably contribute to the prosperity of the Protestant Episcopal Church. But we earnestly wish that this may be pursued with liberality and moderation. The obstacles which stand in the way of union among Christian societies, are too often founded on matters of mere form. They are surmountable therefore by those, who breathing the spirit of Christianity, earnestly labour in this pious work.

"From the Holy Scriptures themselves, rather than the comments of men, must we learn the terms of salvation. Creeds therefore ought to be simple: and we are not anxious to retain any other, than that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed.

"Should a change in the liturgy be proposed, let it be made with caution: and in that case, let the alterations be free, and the style of prayer continue as agreeable as may be to the essential characteristics of our persuasion. We will not now decide, what ceremonies ought to be retained. We wish, however, that those which exist may be estimated according to their utility; and that such as may appear

fit to be laid aside, may no longer be appendages of our church.

"We need only add, that we shall expect a report of your proceedings, to be made to those whom we shall vest with authority to call a convention."

The intercourse with the court of Denmark, noticed in the proceedings of Pennsylvania, having been communicated by the governor of Virginia to the body now assembled; their deputies were instructed to lay the same before the general convention.

This convention of Virginia, issued an address to the members of the episcopal church throughout the state; in order to excite a zeal for the reviving of the communion.

They passed rules, forty-three in number, for the government of the church in Virginia, extending to a great variety of particulars. In these rules, they made direct provision for the trial of bishops and other clergymen by the convention: the matter, concerning which there has been so much dissatisfaction, because of its not being directly provided against by the general convention held within a few months after this convention held in Richmond.

G. Page 20. *Of the Convention in Philadelphia and Wilmington, in* 1786.

The Rev. David Griffith, D. D. rector of Fairfax parish, Alexandria, Virginia, who had been elected to the episcopacy in that state, presided in this con-

vention. Francis Hopkinson, Esq. was the secretary. The convention was opened with a sermon by the president of the preceding convention.

The convention assembled under circumstances, which bore strong appearances of a dissolution of the union, in this early stage of it. The interfering instructions from the churches in the different states—The embarrassment that had arisen from the rejection of the proposed Book in some of the states and the use of it in others—Some dissatisfaction on account of the Scotish episcopacy—and, added to these, the demur expressed in the letter from the English bishops, were what the most sanguine contemplated with apprehension, and were sure prognostics of our falling to pieces, in the opinion of some, who were dissatisfied with the course that had been taken for the organizing of the church. How those difficulties were surmounted, will be seen.

In regard to the interfering instructions, they were all silenced by the motion that stands on the journal, for refering them to the first convention, which should meet fully authorised to determine on a Book of Common Prayer. The instructions, far from proving injurious, had the contrary effect; by showing, as well the necessity of a duly constituted ecclesiastical body, as the futility of taking measures, to be reviewed and authoritatively judged of, in the bodies of which we were the deputies. Such a system appeared so evidently fruitful of discord and disunion, that it was abandoned from this time. The author, who had contemplated the meeting of the interfering

instructions with the motion recorded as his own on the journal, was especially pleased with the effect of it—the silence of unnecessary discussion.

Between the deputies of the churches which had received, and those of the churches which had rejected the proposed Book, or else been silent on the subject; the expedient was adopted, of letting matters remain for a time in the present state with both.

The question of the Scotish episcopacy gave occasion to some warmth. That matter was struck at by certain motions which appear on the journals, and which particularly affected two gentlemen of the body; one of whom—the Rev. Mr. Pilmore—had been ordained by bishop Seabury; and the other, the Rev. William Smith—the younger gentleman of the convention of that name—had been ordained by a bishop of the church, in which bishop Seabury had been consecrated. The convention, did not enter into the opposition to the Scotish succession. A motion, as may be seen on the journals, was made to the effect, by the Rev. Mr. Provoost seconded by the Rev. Robert Smith of South Carolina; who only, of the clergy, were of that mind. But the subject was suppressed—as the journal shows—by the previous question; moved by the Rev. Dr. Smith and seconded by the author. Nevertheless, as it had been affirmed, that gentlemen ordained under the Scotish succession, settling in the represented churches, were understood by some to be under canonical subjection to the bishop who ordained them; and as this circumstance had been urged in argument; the proposal of

rejecting settlements under such subjection, was adopted; although Mr. Pilmore denied that any such thing had been exacted of him. As the measure is stated on the journal, to have been carried on the motion of the author; he thinks it proper to mention, that he never conceived of there having been any ground for it, other than in the apprehension which had been expressed. This temperate guarding against the evil, if it should exist, seemed the best way of obviating measures, which might have led to disputes with the northern clergy. The line of conduct taken, drew off from the meditated rejection some lay gentlemen; who would otherwise have warmly pressed the objections which occur, against the circumstance that had been imagined.

The letter from the English bishops, in answer to the address of the former convention, came to hand not long before the meeting of this. All that could be done in the present stage of the business, was to acknowledge the kindness of their letter, to repeat the application for the episcopacy, and to re-assure them of attachment to the system of the church of England. This was accordingly done, in a letter drafted by the Rev. Dr. Smith, but considerably altered on a motion of the Hon. John Jay, Esq. who thought the draft too submissive. It was in substance an expression of gratitude for the fatherly sentiments contained in the letter of the right reverend prelates; an assurance of there being no intention of departing from the constituent principles of the church of England; an expectation that the proposed alterations

had been received; and a repetition of the request of the former address.

This second application went with no small advantage, from the alterations made in the constitution, before the receiving of the objections made against it, on the part of the English bishops. The issue of this branch of the business may serve, not only for a caution against being precipitate, but for encouragement under inconveniences resulting from the precipitancy of others. In the preceding year, the points alluded to were determined on with too much warmth, and without investigation proportioned to the importance of the subjects. The decisions of that day were now reversed—not to say without a division, but—without even an opposition.

The general temper of moderation displayed in the letter of the archbishops caused it to be a matter of surprize, that the only thing which looked like a condition made on the subject of the Common Prayer Book, was the restoring of the clause concerning the descent into hell, in the apostles' creed. The undeniable fact. that the clause had been an addition to the original creed, occasioned a criticism on the expression in the letter—its "integrity;" to which, it was required to be "restored." Besides, as the clause is not understood in the general acceptation of the words; and as they who hold it in the strict sense must ground it on very uncertain authority of Scripture; it was thought, that more stress was laid on this particular, than the comparative importance of the alteration merited. This can be accounted for

no otherwise, than by the facts which have been mentioned. It is true, that the clause is stated to have been introduced, in opposition to an ancient heresy—meaning the Apollinarian. Is it necessary, then, that every heresy should be denied, in so short a formulary as that of the apostles' creed?

The members of the convention were doubtful, how far the restoring of the Athanasian creed was contemplated by the archbishops as an essential condition. In that case, the matter was desperate; because, although there were some who favoured a compliance, the majority were determined otherwise: among whom, were two members present, who had been chosen to the episcopacy; and who voted against the restoration, as appears on the journal. It was however thought, that the words did not import absolute requisition. The author will here record his opinion, afterwards formed in England. It is, that the inclination of the archbishops on that head was, not to give any trouble, but only to avoid any act or omission, which might have been an implicating of themselves and of their church. His reason is, that in one of the conversations of Bishop Provoost and himself with the archbishop of Canterbury, he brought this matter forwards; evidently intending to say as much of it as he did, and no more; and not wishing a discussion of the point. What he said, was to this effect. "Some wish, that you had retained the Athanasian creed: but I cannot say, that I am uneasy on the subject; for you have retained the doctrine of it in your liturgy; and as to the creed itself, I suppose

you thought it not suited to the use of a congregation." Then, without waiting to hear whether this were the reason or not, he passed to another subject; and never introduced that of the Athanasian creed again.

It was a matter of wonder, that there was not laid in the letter, more stress on the Nicene creed, than on the Athanasian. To the latter, there are other objections than its protest against Arianism and Socinianism: objections which have weight with many, who are not either Socinians or Arians. It had been expected, that the Nicene, being the faith of the early church, would have been more strongly insisted on by the English bishops; of whom not more than two or three—and perhaps they unjustly—were suspected of being at all inclined to the opinions alluded to. Probably the opposition to them, apparent in the liturgy, was what principally gave satisfaction. In what is here said, it is not designed to hold up the necessity of the use of the Nicene creed in the liturgy; but there is pleaded for the making of it a part of the declared faith of the church; which may be done, without a congregational repetition of it. Even to this there is no objection made. The distinction is grounded on the circumstance, that what was sufficient as a symbol of profession in the primitive church, must be so now; unless on the principle already adverted to, of contradicting all errors, in the forms of our devotions. To what this leads, is very evident; or rather, it is impossible to calculate. The

question as to the Nicene creed had been determined in the preceding session.

The moderation of the letter of the archbishops on the subject of the ecclesiastical constitution, and especially the manner of the objection to the part of it which was certainly exceptionable, was universally acknowledged. Their conduct was the more agreeable on this account, that the offence had been done away, before the receipt of their letter. The silence of it in regard to the including of the laity, gave a great advantage over those of the clergy, who were representing the introduction of that order as in opposition to correct principles of ecclesiastical government.

The moderation which governed in this convention, must be conspicuous. One principal reason, was the moderation of the English prelates. They who were thought the least devoted to the episcopal regimen, acknowledged the great forbearance in there being no such high notions on the subject, as had been avowed by some of the clergy on our side of the Atlantic. Added to this, there was noticed the absence of the most distant intimation, of offence taken at the presumed independency of the American church. For although the bishops could not have denied this, consistently with the known principles of their own church; yet it had been reckoned on, as a source of difficulty.

Some gentlemen, who thought that the convention had gone too far as to some points of evangelical doctrine, were highly gratified at finding more zeal in

that respect, than perhaps they had calculated on. The author had an opportunity of seeing the operation of this sentiment, within a few hours after his receipt of the letter. There happening to pass, near his door, a worthy lay-member of the convention of 1785, who had been in the habit of thinking the clergy of the church of England not sufficiently evangelical, he accepted of an invitation to walk in, and hear the communication of the bishops. He was highly delighted; and it is not improbable, that this very circumstance contributed towards such a zeal for our ecclesiastical system, as induced the same gentleman, at his decease, which was a few years afterwards, to bequeath a considerable legacy, which fell after the decease of two relatives then living; the income to be applied towards the support of the bishop of the church in Pennsylvania.

There was another incident, which contributed to render the proceedings of the convention temperate; because it must have convinced them, that the result of considerable changes would have been the disunion of the church. The incident alluded to, was the reading of a memorial from the convention in New Jersey, approving of some of the proceedings of the late general convention; but censuring others, and soliciting a change of counsels in those particulars. The memorial, as was conjectured at the time, and as the author afterwards learned with certainty, was drawn up by the Rev. Dr. Chandler of Elizabeth-Town. This learned and respectable gentleman, after having been in England during the war, had

returned to his family and former residence; labouring under a cancerous or scorbutic complaint, which had consumed a considerable proportion of his face. He had been designed for the contemplated bishopric of Nova Scotia, as the author was afterwards informed by the archbishop of Canterbury. His complaint became too bad, to admit of his undertaking the charge. The same cause, rendered it impossible for him to take an active part, in the organizing of the American church. The author has no doubt, that his letter, written on the present occasion, was among the causes which prevented the disorganizing of it.

For this memorial, see the Appendix No. 7.

The present state of things induced the convention, before their adjournment, to appoint a committee; with power to reassemble them in Wilmington, in the state of Delaware. Previously to their adjournment, they determined on their second address, already noticed, to the English prelates: for which, see the Appendix No. 8.

Soon after the rising of the convention, there came to the author's hands a letter of the archbishops of Canterbury and York: for which, see the Appendix No. 9.

Shortly afterwards, there came a letter from the archbishop of Canterbury only, enclosing a recently obtained act of parliament, authorising the solicited consecrations. See the Appendix No. 10.

On the receipt of the letters, the committee exercised the power committed to them, of summoning

the convention to meet at Wilmington on the 10th day of October.

On the said day, the convention re-assembled; and, Dr. Griffiths being absent, the Rev. Dr. Provoost presided. But, before a relation of what passed at this meeting, occasion is taken to record the comments generally made on the communications from England.

There was expressed general satisfaction, with the testimonials to be required of those who might come for the episcopacy; and especially with the testimonial to be signed by the members of the general convention. This body had not been without their apprehensions, that some unsuitable character, as to morals, might be elected: and yet, for them to have assumed a control, might have been an improper interference with the churches in the individual states. What was demanded by the archbishops, went to the point in the general wish; and yet, was not to be complained of or evaded by any individual.

The question to be determined on at the present session, was—Whether the American church would avail herself of the opportunity of obtaining the episcopacy; which had been so earnestly desired, ever since the settlement of the colonies; the want of which had been so long complained of; and which was now held out in offer. When the author considers how much, besides the preference due to episcopal government, the continuance or the restoration of divine worship in the almost deserted churches,

their very existence as a society, and of course the interests of religion and virtue were concerned in the issue, he looks back with a remnant of uneasy sensation, at the hazard which this question run; and at the probability which then threatened, that the determination might be contrary to what took place.

On the meeting of the convention, a committee were appointed. Those who acted in the business were, from New York, Rev. Dr. Provoost and James Duane, Esq.; from New Jersey, Rev. Uzal Ogden and Henry Waddel, Esq.; from Pennsylvania, Rev. Dr. White and Samuel Powel, Esq.; from Delaware, Rev. Sydenham Thorne; from Maryland, Rev. Dr. Smith; and from South Carolina, Rev. Robert Smith. We sat up the whole of the succeeding night, digesting the determinations in the form in which they appear on the journal. When they were brought into the convention, little difficulty occurred, in regard to what was proposed concerning the retaining of the Nicene and the rejecting of the Athanasian creed. But a warm debate arose, on the subject of the descent into hell, in the apostles' creed. Although this was at last carried, agreeably to the proposal of the committee; yet, whoever looks into the journal will see, that the result was not owing to the having of a majority of votes; but to the nullity of the votes of those churches, in which the clergy and the laity were divided.

Had the issue been different, there could have been no proceeding to England for consecration at

this time; because they who went had all along made up their minds not to go, until the way should be opened by previous negotiation. As the matter now stood, there was evidently no ground, on which the English bishops could have rejected the persons sent, unless they had made the Athanasian creed an essential: which would not have been warranted by the feeble recommendation of their letter; not to say, by the impossibility of justifying to the world the withholding of episcopal succession, for no other reason than this, from a church descended from their own, and once a part of it. It is here supposed, that the very awkward appearance on the journal of the preceding vote, must have attracted the attention of the archbishop of Canterbury, and of those whom he consulted: for he took occasion to remark, what he thought the exceptionable plan of making the records on the journal so particular. His cautious avoiding of minute discussion, especially in the way of censure, induced us to account for this remark in the way stated.

An address to the two archbishops was drawn up by this convention, to be forwarded by the two bishops elect present in it; who now declared their intention of embarking for England. See for it the Appendix No. 11.

It would be a withholding of justice from a highly deserving gentleman, not to notice his zeal and probably his influence, in accomplishing the views of the American church.

The hostility to the Scotch episcopacy had derived some weight from scruples on the subject, which were communicated by Granville Sharp, Esq. the author of many learned publications; himself being of a religious and amiable character, and zealous for the system of the church of England. In a letter to Dr. Manning, a baptist minister and president of Rhode Island college, who had been recently in England, Mr. Sharp had expressed his doubts on the subject of the Scotch episcopacy, grounded on documents in his hands of his grand father Abp. Sharp; who was so conspicuous for his opposition to the arbitrary measures of James II. Dr. Manning had communicated the information in such a line, as that it was privately circulated during the convention of 1785. On its being urged in conversation, advantage was taken on the other side, of the singularity of the channel of communication. This however was accidental; it not appearing, that the writer contemplated any public effect. He afterwards watched the progress of the business, and gave his aid in every step of it.

Before the meeting on the adjournment, there had been sent to the author by Dr. Franklin, then president of the state, a letter to him from Mr. Sharp, manifesting christian concern in the business pending; uneasiness at some reports which had reached England, of our declining towards Socinianism; and satisfaction from some discoveries which contradicted the reports. In the let-

ter to Dr. Franklin, there were extracts of letters written by Mr. Sharp to the archbishop of Canterbury, evincive of interest taken in our behalf. In some late publications in England, there have been erroneous statements of the agency of Mr. Sharp. For this reason, and to manifest the Christian zeal of that worthy person, his communications are given in the Appendix No. 12.

Afterwards, when Bishop Provoost and the author were in England, they became acquainted with the said worthy person; who continued to interest himself for the church. On a certain day, he made us a visit, and expressed much solicitude on the subject of our business; which he supposed, from its not having been accomplished immediately, to have met with some interruption. He was on his way to visit the archbishop of Canterbury; intending, he said, to remind his grace of some things, by which he seemed to stand pledged, considering the shape in which the matter was now before him. Mr. Sharp was thanked for his benevolent zeal, but was requested not to offer to the archbishop any thing in the way of complaint; and was informed, that there was no room for any: his grace having intimated, that the short delay would be only until the ensuing meeting of parliament. There was also given to Mr. Sharp the reason of this short delay; which will appear in its proper place.

Before the declaration made by two of the bishops elect, of their intention to embark for England, there was perceived a difficulty likely to occur in the case

of Dr. Provoost, on account of subscription to be made as proposed by the convention of 1785, and considered as satisfactory by the English bishops. The convention in New York had held in suspense the proposed liturgy, including the articles. This was the faith and the worship recognized in the constitution; and not yet adopted by the church in which Dr. Provoost was to preside.

To meet this difficulty, the convention adopted the expedient of a form to be subscribed by him, and by any other person in the same circumstances. The form bound the subscriber to the use of the English book of Common Prayer, except so far as it had been altered in consequence of the civil revolution; until the proposed book should be ratified by the convention of the state in which the party lived; and to the use of the latter book, when so ratified. A promise to this effect was signed by Dr. Provoost, and the document is in possession of the author. It is part of an act of the present convention, predicated on the requisitions of the archbishops. See for it the Appendix, No. 13.

The provision thus made by the convention, did not altogether relieve Dr. Provoost from the difficulty. Subscription was to be repeated in England, agreeably to the requisition of the archbishops, doubtless with the concurrence of the bishops generally. It was not probable, that the archbishop of Canterbury would accommodate to another form, without further consultation; which would at least have occa-

sioned trouble and delay. Dr. Provoost candidly stated his situation in this particular to the archbishop, to whom the disclosure was evidently unexpected. After a short pause, the author remarked, that if in England, any changes should be made in the ecclesiastical institutions, by competent authority, and in themselves not contrary to Christian doctrine, the subscription of the clergy would not—it was supposed—be hindered by the ordination vows by which they were now bound. On a look of appeal to the archbishop for the correctness of this sentiment, he assented to it unequivocally. He would never have given a decision on the special case of Dr. Provoost: but the supposed case had so evident a bearing on it, that the scruple was dismissed. It had rested on the mind of the Doctor; who, on a question of truth and honour, would not have erred on the side of laxity, in regard to promise to be pledged.

H. Page 21. *Of Personal Intercourse with the Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Sundry matters having passed, in this intercourse, which may be thought connected with the subject of these sheets; the author supposes that it may be of use, to insert in this place certain letters, which he addressed from England to the committee of the church in Pennsylvania; with notes taken for another letter, intended to have been written, if an opportunity had offered. The committee were the Rev. Dr.

Samuel Magaw, the Rev. Robert Blackwell, and the Rev. Joseph Pilmore, of the clergy; and of the laity, the Hon. Francis Hopkinson, Dr. Gerardus Clarkson, and John Swanwick, Esquire.

Westminster, December 6, 1786.

GENTLEMEN,

I think it my duty, and it is my inclination, to embrace the earliest opportunity of acquainting you with my arrival in England; and of the progress made, by the blessing of God, in the important business of my voyage.

On Thursday, the 2d of November, I embarked at New York, in company of my worthy friend and brother Dr. Provoost. The next day, we left land. After a passage, in which we had some tempestuous, although for the most part pleasant weather, we made the lights of Scilly, on Monday the 20th of the same month; and the next day landed, in good health, at Falmouth. In giving this account of my prosperous voyage, I am happy in the conviction, that I am writing to those, who, as well from private friendship, as from their interest in the great concerns of the church, will rejoice with me on the occasion; and join me in devout acknowledgments to almighty God.

Owing to sundry incidents, we did not reach the metropolis, until Wednesday the 29th; when we made it our first business to wait on his excellency Mr. Adams; who politely returned our visit, on the even-

ing of the same day; and finding that it was our wish to be introduced by him to his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, readily undertook the office; and named Friday for the purpose. Accordingly, on that day we accompanied Mr. Adams to the palace of Lambeth. His grace, having received no intimation of the intended visit, was not at home. In the evening, Col. Smith, the secretary of the legation, waited on him, to request the appointment of an hour: he named 12 o'clock, on Monday. At that time, we again accompanied Mr. Adams to Lambeth; where we had a polite and condescending reception, entirely answerable to the sentiments which we had been taught to entertain, of this great and good archbishop.

After some questions on his part respecting our passage, we presented our papers: on which we were asked—Whether we expected another gentleman, in time to be consecrated with us? In answer to this, his grace was informed, that the Rev. Dr. Griffith, the only gentleman recommended by the general convention besides the present company, would not, in all probability, be over before the spring. Here I must note, that my saying of this was in consequence of a letter received from that gentleman, after my embarkation.

Dr. Provoost then mentioned, that there was a peculiarity in the charter of his church, requiring his presence at the annual election at Easter: on which his grace said, that he had no inclination to detain

us so long; and indeed would give us no delay, provided our papers should be found satisfactory; which he presumed would be the case. But at the same time he apologised for his postponing of our business for two or three days; being engaged in some ecclesiastical business, depending before the privy council; and also in some concerns of a college, of which he is the visitor. He added, that when this was done, he would see us again. In the course of the conversation, the archbishop asked me, whether I had received the letter signed by himself alone, in which he had mentioned, that three was a sufficient number to be sent for consecration; and whether we understood it to be the sentiment, that three only should come. On his being told, that the letter had been received, and so understood, he gave the reason—That as the present service was asked of the church of England, in consequence of an extraordinary exigency, it seemed proper to do no more in the affair, than the exigency required; and to leave all subsequent measures for the continuing of our ministry, to be taken among ourselves.

This is, gentlemen, to the best of my recollection, the substance of the conversation; and we shall be daily in expectation of renewing our intercourse with his grace.

Having paid our respects in the first place to the archbishop, we were of opinion, that it was our duty to wait on the lord bishop of London; his lordship's predecessors having been the diocesans of our

church: although we understood, that the present bishop—the venerable Dr. Lowth—had undergone a decay of his great talents; as well as laboured under grievous bodily complaints. Accordingly we waited, yesterday, on the Rev. Mr. Eaton, his chaplain; by whom I had been hospitably entertained, when formerly in this country. Mr. Eaton, after much conversation concerning the affairs of our church, stated to us his lordship's situation; mentioning, among other things, his debility of mind to be such, that although he should answer a question properly and pointedly, yet he might, in half an hour, forget both the question and the answer: and his indisposition was so considerable, that a morning might be appointed; and yet, when the time should come, his lordship might be incapable of receiving us. These things he thought it necessary to mention; but doubted not, that there would be named an early day for our introduction. Accordingly, in the evening, we received a note from Mr. Eaton, appointing to-morrow morning for the interview.

I have the pleasure of acquainting you, gentlemen, that we find from many, who had conversed with the archbishop before our arrival, of there not being the least doubt, of our church's having retained the essential doctrines of the Gospel, as held by the church of England.

These, gentlemen, are the particulars, which I have thought it important to convey to you. By the next packet I intend, if it please God, to acquaint you

with any further progress that may be made in the business committed to me: and I remain, in the mean time, with my prayers for your health and happiness,

Your affectionate brother,
and very humble servant,
WM. WHITE.

The Committee of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

P. S. I trust, there will be no occasion, that my friends should write to me after the receipt of this. But they will not expect, that in the present stage of the business, I should fix the time of my leaving England.

Westminster, January 1, 1787.

GENTLEMEN,

I embrace the opportunity of the packet of this month, to communicate to you the present state of the business, on which I am in England.

Between the writing of my last and our hearing from the archbishop, there intervened about a fortnight: during which Dr. Provoost and myself had been informed by several who had seen his grace, particularly by the lord bishop of Oxford, that our papers were satisfactory. The delay was accounted for, by certain business that required immediate attention. At the end of that term, we received an invitation from the archbishop to dine with him, on the 21st. We accordingly attended; and had every

reason to be satisfied with our reception and entertainment. His grace did not introduce the subject of our application to him, until our leaving the company; when he stepped aside with us; and mentioned, as near as my memory serves, to the following effect—That having, from the beginning, consulted the Bench of Bishops on this business, he was desirous of taking their opinion, as to the manner of accomplishing it—That he had shown our papers to a few, who were in town—That he expected to see more of them in a short time—And that he would then see us again. We have not heard from him since: for the greater number of the bishops are still at their respective dioceses; although expected to be in town soon.

In my last, I mentioned our intention of waiting on the lord bishop of London; as an instance of the respect which we thought due from us, to the successor of the former diocesans of America. We accordingly attended, on the day appointed by himself, and were courteously received by this celebrated prelate; who expressed himself gratified by our waiting on him, and asked for our address, as intending to see us again: which, however, can hardly happen; as his lordship has been since taken extremely ill; and, I believe, continues in imminent danger.*

* We probably saw this eminent man on the last day on which our visit could have been received. His appearance was that of health, and he followed us to the head of his stairs, without any appearance of debility. We understood, that he had a violent return of his disease (the stone) the next day; and he

I fully expected to have mentioned to you, gentlemen, by this opportunity, the time of the accomplishment of the purpose, for which you desired me to come. Although disappointed in this, I can express to you my full persuasion, that the delay does not arise from any cause, which can defeat our object.

With my constant prayers for yourselves and our whole church, I am, gentlemen,

Your affectionate brother,

WM. WHITE.

The Committee of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania.

P. S. January 2. This morning, the lord bishop of Landaff did us the honour, on his coming to town, to call on us, without waiting for our being introduced to him; and to desire us to appoint a day, for our dining with him. I mention this, to enable me to confirm the sentiment already expressed: because his lordship not only showed the utmost good will as to our business, but seemed surprized that it was not already finished; until we mentioned the reason of the archbishop, whom his lordship had not seen.

died very soon after our departure from England. In the conversation of about an hour which we held with him, he made various inquiries concerning America, and was the most pointed on the subject of slavery. On being informed of the then late act in Pennsylvania for the gradual abolition of it, he answered with strong emphasis—That is a very good measure.

Westminster, January 20, 1787.

GENTLEMEN,

I now address you, with the pleasing prospect of being soon able to re-embark for America, after the accomplishment of the business committed to me. It is possible, indeed, that I may arrive before the vessel, by which this letter will be conveyed. Even in that case, it may serve for a continuation of the narrative of the proceedings of my honoured colleague and myself. And as there is entire harmony between us, both of sentiment and of affection; I shall, for the sake of brevity, omit distinguishing between us in the following account; using the plural number, in stating any thing that was said by either of us on the occasion.

After my last letter, we received from the archbishop, through a friend who had spoken to him on the subject, full satisfaction, that the delay arose from no other cause, than his grace's waiting for the arrival of the bishops; and that it was his intention to finish the transaction, in time for our departure by the February packet: it being the opportunity, by which he had understood from us, that it was our inclination to return.

The queen's birth-day, and the near approach of the meeting of parliament, have brought to town many of the right reverend bench. Accordingly, we received yesterday a note from the archbishop, desiring us to call on him this morning. We attended, and had a conversation of two hours; of which it is

now my intention to give you the substance; as far as my memory serves, and as is connected with the affairs of our church.

His grace began with expressing his hopes, that we had not thought him inattentive to our business. He said, that soon after our arrival, he had mentioned the matter to the king; that the necessary powers from government would be soon obtained; and that the consecration should be either on the 28th instant, or on that day seven-night; and that the latter day the best suited his convenience, and should be made the appointment, provided it were consistent with our intentions of returning by the packet.

After making the suitable acknowledgments of his goodness, and declaring our full conviction, that he had used all possible expedition, we said, that the day after the last mentioned Sunday was the intended time of our departure, in the event of our being ready for the packet; and that therefore, we could not press for the matter to be expedited, sooner than was convenient to his grace.

He then gently touched on the subject, in regard to which our last convention had not complied with the recommendation of the two archbishops. He said, that some were dissatisfied with the omission of the creed, here alluded to; that, for his part, he was not uneasy on the head, being satisfied, that the doctrine of the creed is retained, in many places of the Prayer Book; but that, however, he did not like the manner, in which it appeared on the minutes: prefering the mode of doing business used in all the

bodies with which he was acquainted; among whom, it was customary to mention the business brought before them, and the result of the debate, without specifying the votes of the individual members. Whether his grace had here a view to the votes of those whom he was addressing, in regard to the Athanasian creed, we did not know: but the answer which he received was to this purpose—That if the convention had taken a wrong method in the above particular, it proceeded from their wish to show themselves open and candid; and that the church, in one of the states, had instructed their deputies to move for the so specifying of the votes.

His grace then said, that in the beginning of the business, there had been many reports and apprehensions; that this required of the bishops to be circumspect; and that even when our proceedings arrived, there were some things, which they could not but wish otherwise. And here, said he, I am not alluding to the liturgy, but to the very easy manner, in which the degradation of bishops seems allowed to be done. It was remarked to his grace, that the offensive article had been altered. He answered—Yes, and much for the better.

From this, his grace passed to some remarks concerning the Psalter. He said, that whatever use there might be in leaving out some parts of the Psalms, he saw no propriety in altering the connexion, in the manner in which we had done it. He did not mean to undervalue the abilities of those employed in it; but thought it was a work of more time

and difficulty, than they seem to have conceived. From a desire of taking his grace's meaning precisely on this subject, it was here mentioned to him, that if we understood him, he did not object to the omission of some portions of the Psalms, from the worship of the church. The reply was—He had not fully considered that subject; and only meant at present to remark on the connecting of portions together, in such a manner as might break the connexion, and alter the sense of the original compositions: especially of such of them as are prophetical. But his grace did not allege, that the sense had been actually altered, in any place.

In speaking of the liturgy, the archbishop expressed his hopes, that it would not be a matter liable to alterations, at every convention. He was answered, that although it was still submitted to the church as a proposed liturgy, so as to allow of the correction of any part of it, which might appear, on mature consideration, to have been hastily done; yet there were no description of men in this country, who would more object to the leaving of the liturgy in so fluctuating a state, than the great body of episcopalians in America.

The archbishop took notice of a want of formality, in our not having brought a regular instrument of our election: although he allowed, that our election was fully implied in the papers which had been produced; so as to leave no doubt of the fact. This naturally led us to speak of the forms of recommendation, prescribed by the two archbishops. In

respect to these we ventured to declare, that the church at large in America acknowledged great obligations; and would expect that their future bishops should make it a rule of their conduct. He replied, that the appointment of persons to the episcopal character was of the highest consequence; and earnestly wished, that it may be managed with great discretion in America; and that he thought himself obliged to use the precautions which we had mentioned. For, said he, gentlemen, you were strangers to me; although I had heard you respectfully spoken of. At the same time, there were some who apprehended, that persons of a very unsuitable description would be sent. I thought it improbable—he continued—that general and particular conventions would unite in recommending such persons; and yet it was my determination, that if such should be sent, and under circumstances carrying full evidence of the unsuitableness, not to have troubled the bishops with the affair, but to have taken the brunt of a refusal on myself. The answer was to this effect—That if there had been any danger of such a measure, the requisitions of the two archbishops must have operated as a prevention: that we trusted, however, there was not a sufficient number of our brethren, in any state, capable of wilfully imposing an improper character on his grace; and that therefore, if any such character had been recommended, it must have been some years ago, and from the want of due information.

His grace, in some part of the conversation, was led to speak of the act of parliament: in respect to

which, we took notice of the clause, requiring the consent of the king, under his sign manual. This clause, we told him, we had understood from private information, not to have been in the act, as proposed by the bishops. We ventured to say, however, that the principle of the restriction was well understood in America, so as to occasion no offence there. The archbishop answered, that it was not in the act, as proposed by the bishops; but that he thought it a very proper clause; and that it was particularly acceptable to himself; since otherwise, the matter would have rested wholly with him, which he did not wish.

He introduced a subject which was unexpected to us; and may influence measures in America.. He said, that, when bishop of Bangor, he had presented the bishop elect of the Isle of Man to the archbishop of York for consecration; and that none were concerned in the consecration, besides the archbishop and himself: that he had set on foot an inquiry, respecting past usage in the province of York; and that if the practice had been the same in times past, perhaps it might prove unnecessary for another gentleman to come from America. In the conversation that ensued on this head, it was thrown out on our side, that if the ancient canonical number should be dispensed with, perhaps doubts might subsist in the minds of some, in regard to the validity; and that such an apprehension might be productive of some irregularity and inconvenience. To this the archbishop replied, that the latitude, if left, would be intended merely for our accommodation; but was by

no means to prevent the coming over of a third applicant, if that should be thought eligible by us.

I think it a matter worthy to be mentioned in this letter, that the archbishop informed us of thoughts entertained by him, of giving to the world a publication, relative to the business before us; stating the reasons influencing him in the measures which he had adopted. We took the liberty of expressing our hearty approbation of the proposal: and as his grace did not seem to have come to a determination, we hoped that he would find no objection to it, on further consideration.

After discussing the above mentioned subjects, more fully than I can be expected to relate; we apologised for taking up so much of his grace's time, and arose to take our leave. But we were encouraged by the condescension shown, to mention, that as the king was to open the parliament in a few days, it would be a gratification to us to gain admittance to the house of lords, on that occasion, through the good offices of his grace. The archbishop took this freedom in very good part; desired us to consider him as on terms of friendship; and assured us, that he would send us a note of admission, and express in it the time, which his majesty should appoint for his coming to the house, in order to prevent our unnecessary waiting.*

I suppose, that this incident reminded the archbishop of a question which had been asked him by

* The promise was fulfilled

Mr. Adams, at our first interview—Whether it would not be proper for us to wait on the king; and whether, in that case, the archbishop or himself would be the proper person to introduce us. To this question, the archbishop had answered at the time, that the first step was for himself to be satisfied, before any notice could properly be given to the king. In relation to this subject, his grace now said, that if we were to be introduced to the king, it ought to be on the ground of thanking him, for his leave given for the ensuing consecration, under his sign manual; and that whether this would be liable to any objection or not, we must judge. We made no scruple to answer, that there could be no objection to it, arising out of the relations in which we stood. He then said, that he supposed Mr. Adams chose to introduce us himself. We answered, that although the proposal originated with Mr. Adams, yet we believed he wished to leave it to his grace, to determine on the manner. To this he replied, that he would consider of it further, and let us know.

His grace then said, that he was desirous of appointing some day for our dining with him again; intending to ask some of the bishops to meet us, and also some of our friends. This led us to ask his grace's opinion, as to the propriety of our calling at the houses of all the bishops; in order to thank them for the good office soon to be done, through the favor of the whole bench, although especially of his grace, to the episcopal church in America. He an-

swered, that he thought it proper, and that it would be very kindly taken.

As the gentlemen to whom I am writing are members of the corporation for the widows' fund; it may be proper for me to inform them, that I stated to his grace the appointment of Dr. Smith, Mr. Chew, and myself, for the addressing of the society for the propagation of the Gospel, respecting the arrears due on their former grants. He promised to consider of the foundation of the intended application; and for that purpose, as I had mentioned my being furnished with a former abstract of the proceedings of our corporation, noticing the grants, he desired me to send it to him.

I have given you, gentlemen, a long and I am afraid tedious account of this conversation; but I hope that the motive will excuse me; which is my desire of your having as complete a view as possible, of the accomplishing of a negociation so important, as we all conceive, to our communion not only of the present, but also of every future generation.

That God may bless the event, which, under his good providence, is soon to take place; is the constant wish and prayer of, gentlemen,

Your affectionate brother,
and humble servant,
WM. WHITE.

The Committee of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Pennsylvania.

Materials for another letter to the committee, if an opportunity should offer, before my reaching of Philadelphia.

Monday, January 29th. We received a verbal message from the archbishop, desiring us to call on him. We attended. His design was to ask some questions, respecting the forms of our testimonials; and the titles to be given to us, in our letters of consecration. We staid with him nearly two hours; and had much conversation with him, concerning the affairs of our church; which confirmed us in our high opinion of his regard for her, and of his desire to advance the interests of religion.

Friday, February 2d. The mornings of the two preceding days had been spent in visiting the different bishops, who were in town; agreeably to the proposal before made to the archbishop. A few of them—the archbishop of York, and the bishops of Oxford, Landaff, Rochester and Bangor had previously visited us; and we had seen the bishops of Worcester and Exeter, a few days before, at the archbishop's, at dinner: an occasion, which I have not particularly noticed; because nothing passed on it, interesting to our mission.* Those of the bishops whom we found

* On the said occasion, we witnessed a singular ceremony, which we supposed to be a remnant of the state of former times. Soon in the morning, we had received a note from the archbishop, intimating, that the then day of the week was his public day, during the session of parliament; and that he should be glad to see us on any weekly day so mentioned—on that day in particular, if disengaged. We waited on him, and supposed from

at home, seemed to take the compliment in good part; expressed great good-will to our church; and wished, that our longer stay, after their coming to town, had permitted their showing of us attentions.*

On this day, we waited on the archbishop in consequence of his own appointment at our former interview, in order to accompany him to court.

what we saw, that the several eminent persons who entered, came uninvited as to that particular time. Before dinner the archbishop rose, bowed to the company, and left the room. They followed; all of them, no doubt, besides ourselves, understanding the transaction. After passing through a suite of rooms, we found ourselves in the chapel; in which were the two chaplains in their surplices. One of them read the litany; after which, we returned to the room wherein we had been received. Soon afterwards, we were called to dinner. It is probable, that such a visit on some Wednesday—it was the weekly day—during the session of parliament, is expected of every member of either house, who lives in habits of acquaintance with the primate.

The reading of the litany, including the prayers attached to it in the English book of Common Prayer, and none other, seems a remnant of former practice; it having been originally a distinct service. It is on this account, that the incident has been related.

* The prelates whom we found, were the archbishop of York, the bishop of Rochester, the very aged bishop of Carlisle, in whom we saw the wreck of one of the first scholars of the age, and the bishops of Salisbury, Bristol, and Ely. The first mentioned of these three, since bishop of Durham, commended the moderation manifested in our service for the fourth of July. This was gratifying; as it had been pronounced by some on our side of the Atlantic, that the said service would of itself be sufficient, to induce a rejection of the application of the American church.

Thither we went together, in his coach. On being introduced to the king, I made this preconceived address—That "we were happy in the opportunity of thanking his majesty, for his license granted to his grace the archbishop, to convey the episcopal succession to the church in America." The king made this answer; which I set down, to show the kindness of the archbishop*—"His grace has given me such an account of the gentlemen who have come over, that I am glad of the present opportunity of serving the interests of religion." His majesty then asked Dr. Provoost, whether the episcopal communion were not numerous in New York: and was answered by the Doctor in the affirmative, with further thanks for the license granted. The king then passed to the next in the circle, and after a little while we withdrew, with the archbishop.†

We had contemplated this measure of waiting on the king, as of peculiar delicacy. In the character of citizens of the United States of America, we

* It may be presumed, however, that such civility is the usual courtesy of the place.

† While we were waiting in our places, until the king should come to us in his passing from one attendant to another, there occurred an additional instance of the attention of the archbishop to the delicacy of our situation. When the king speaks to you, said he, you will only bow: adding, with a smile—when an English bishop is presented, he does something more. This alluded to the ancient form of doing homage for his barony on his knees. We were aware of the different circumstances in which we stood: but it was considerate, to guard against the danger of mistake.

should have thought it inconsistent in us, to have made any application to the civil authority of Great Britain. The act of parliament, had laid on the archbishop the obtaining of the consent of the king, under his sign manual. This consent had been obtained, before our going to court; and therefore, we saw no impropriety in the visit.

Sunday, February 4th. We attended at the palace of Lambeth, for consecration. The assistants of the archbishop, on the occasion, were the archbishop of York, who presented; and the bishop of Bath and Wells and the bishop of Peterborough who joined with the two archbishops, in the imposition of hands. It was particularly agreeable to us, to see among them the bishop of Bath and Wells; because we had all along understood, that in the beginning, this aged and venerable prelate had entertained scruples, on the subject of the application of our church: and it was principally owing to his lordship, that such a point was made of the descent into hell, in the apostles' creed. We presumed, that his difficulties were now removed. Dr. Drake, one of the archbishop's chaplains, preached; and Dr. Randolph, the other chaplain, read the prayers. The sermon, was a sensible discussion of the long litigated subject of the authority of the church, to ordain rites and ceremonies. The text was—"Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Cor. xiv. 40. The discourse, had very little reference to the peculiarity of the occasion. The truth was, as the archbishop had told us on Friday, on our way to court, that he had

spoken to a particular friend to compose a sermon for the occasion; and had given him a sketch of what he wished to be the scope of it. This friend had just sent him information of a domestic calamity, which would excuse him from attendance; and the archbishop was then under the necessity, of giving a short notice to one of his chaplains.

The consecration was performed in the chapel of the palace of the archbishop; in the presence of his family and his household, and very few others; among whom was my old friend, the Rev. Mr. Duché. I had asked the archbishop's leave to introduce him: and it was a great satisfaction to me, that he was there; the recollection of the benefit which I had received from his instructions in early life, and a tender sense of the attentions which he had shown me almost from my infancy, together with the impressions left by the harmony which had subsisted between us in the discharge of our joint pastoral duty in Philadelphia, being no improper accompanyments to the feelings suited to the present very interesting transaction of my life. I hope, that I felt the weight of the occasion. May God bless the meditations and the recollections by which I had endeavoured to prepare myself for it; and give them their due effect on my temper and conduct, in the new character in which I am to appear!

The solemnity being over, we dined with the archbishop and the bishops; and spent with them the remainder of the day. I took occasion to mention to his grace my conviction, that the American

church would be sensible of the kindness now shown; and my trust, that the American bishops, besides the usual incentives to duty, would have this in addition; lest the church of England should have cause to regret her act, performed on this day. He answered, that he fully believed there would be no such cause; that the prospect was very agreeable to him; that he bore a great affection for our church; and that he should be always glad to hear of her prosperity; and also of the safe arrival and the welfare of us individually.

After spending the remainder of the evening very agreeably, we took our leave, which was affectionate on both sides; and on our part, with hearts deeply sensible of the regard which had been shown to our church, and of the personal civilities which we had received.*

Monday, February 5th. As an evidence of his grace's delicacy, I deposit the account of fees,

* During dinner this day at Lambeth, we were surprized at a conversation introduced by the bishop of Peterborough. We had been accustomed to think it a sort of adjunct to the claim of churchmanship to consider the "Εικων Βασιλικη" or "Royal Portraiture" as a true expression of the feelings of king Charles I. in some of the most trying circumstances of his life. The bishop remarked, and his brethren assented to the position, that the contrary was now clearly proved, by a late publication of some papers of lord Clarendon. These papers, it was said, show the work to have been written by bishop Gauden. The simplicity of the style of the work, and the contrary property said to be discernable in the writings of that bishop, are the circumstances which inclined Mr. Hume to give the credit of the composition to the king.

brought to us this morning by his secretary; and give the following narrative of the manner in which that business was conducted.

On the morning of our visit to court, I mentioned to the archbishop, agreeably to preconcert with Dr. Provoost, that there must necessarily have been some charges for the expenses of office, in carrying the business of our church through the civil department; and requested to know the amount, that we might discharge it. The archbishop answered, that if he should inform us on that point, it must be on the principle, that in an affair of no great magnitude, it might seem disrespectful to us, to withhold the satisfaction demanded. He added, that on the occasion of the consecration of an English bishop, there were very considerable expenses to different persons of the archbishop's court and of his household; which expenses he thought improper on the present occasion, and should therefore prohibit them. After the consecration, he, within our hearing, informed a gentleman from Doctors' Commons, Robert Jenner, Esq. who had attended officially in his civil law robe, with a view to the local registry, that as we intended to leave London the next day, our papers must be ready in the morning. On the gentleman's answering, that he would wait on us with them, the archbishop replied—No; you are to bring them to my secretary, who will wait on them: evidently with the design, that the pecuniary part of the transaction should pass under his own control. The fees paid by us jointly amounted to *L.*14 3 1, being altogether in

the line of public offices, and which the archbishop must have paid but for the request made on our part.

For the instrument of consecration, recorded in the archiepiscopal registry, see Appendix, No. 14.

On the morning of the day of our leaving of the city, I received a note from the archbishop. Although it begins with a message of civility to a respectable divine in New Jersey, not long before in England, I take the prominent object to have been the conveying of information, guarding against an impression which might have been made by what had passed concerning consecration in the province of York. The note shall be given, because of its bearing on the question concerning the number required for consecration in the English church. See the Appendix, No. 15.

There being in possession some documents in the civil line, sustaining facts mentioned in the statements, the present opportunity is improved to the perpetuating of them. They are,

(1) A letter from his excellency Richard Henry Lee, esquire, president of congress, to his excellency John Adams, esquire, minister plenipotentiary to the court of Great Britain.

(2) A letter from Mr. Adams to Mr. Lee, in answer.

(3) A letter from the archbishop of Canterbury to Mr. Adams, after an interview between them.

(4) A certificate of the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania.

(5) A certificate of his excellency governor Patrick Henry of Virginia.

In reference to the last two documents, and to a similar one in the case of Dr. Provoost, given by his excellency governor Clinton of New York, but not in possession, it is to be recollected, that they were to be applied for in consequence of an instruction of the general convention. They may reasonably be supposed to have had an effect, in accomplishing the views of the episcopal church. See the Appendix, No. 16.

It was in the statements, that Richard Peters, esquire, having visited England on private business, was requested by the committee of the convention to wait on the archbishop of Canterbury on the business concerning which the English prelates had been addressed. The consequent letter of Mr. Peters to the committee has a tendency to throw light on the subject, and is therefore given in the Appendix, No. 17.*

* There being nothing more in the letters to the committee concerning the claim of the corporation of the Widows' Fund, the silence seems to require a reason. The abstract was sent to the archbishop, agreeably to his desire. In the next interview he remarked, that he perceived the evidence of the promise of the society in England; but wished to know to what period the society in America considered it as extending. The author had not been informed on that point by the committee, and made answer accordingly. The undertaking of the settling of this would have involved him in no less a difficulty, than that of determining at what period, American allegiance ceased. If it were on the 4th of July 1776, there could be no claim beyond that day, on a fund appropriated by charter to the dominions of

We left London on the evening of the 5th of February; reached Falmouth on the 10th; were detained there by contrary winds, until Sunday the 17th, when we embarked; and after a voyage of precisely seven weeks, landed at New York on the afternoon of Easter Sunday, April the 7th: sensible, I trust, of the goodness of God in our personal protection and safety; and in his having thus brought to a prosperous issue the measures adopted for the obtaining of that episcopacy, the want of which had been the subject of the complaint of our church from the earliest settlement of the colonies; and which, we hope, will be now improved to her increase, and to the glory of her divine Head.

I. Page 24. *Of the Convention in* 1789.

The business, was to have been preceded by a sermon from bishop Provoost: but the bishop being detained by indisposition, Dr. Smith preached. The only bishop present presided, and the secretary was Francis Hopkinson, esquire.

Previously to the meeting of the convention it was foreseen, that the unfinished business of the episcopacy, and the relative situation of the church in Connecticut, would be the principal objects of at-

the British crown. On the other hand, to have dated independence from the acknowledgment of it by Great Britain, would have been inconsistent with American citizenship. Accordingly, nothing more passed on the subject. It should be noticed, that to the former period, there was very little due.

tention; and must be thought important, not only in themselves, but because of the influence which each of them had on the other. It may be proper to say something of these, before an entry on the narrative of what passed concerning them, in the convention.

There is an implication—at least the author had always so understood it—in the address to the English prelates, that the American episcopal church was to obtain from them the beginning of the succession in the number of bishops competent, according to the English rule and practice, to perpetuate it. Doubtless, this sentiment was much strengthened, by the consideration of the antiquity and the expediency of the rule, which required the presence and the consent of three bishops in every consecration. Although it had been the clear sense on both sides, that the American church was entirely independent on the church of England; yet, on this point of procuring from England the canonical number of bishops, the promise seemed to have been voluntarily pledged; so that the English prelates might, in the event of non-compliance, have laid the charge of imposition. It is true, the archbishop of Canterbury seems not to have been tenacious of the canonical number; as appears from what he said of a consecration for the Isle of Man, related in the author's letter from England. Yet his grace was careful to correct his mistake, in regard to that measure; as is evident from the note written by him to the author, on the day on which he left London. If some of the archbishop's brethren, of the right reverend bench, should have been found stricter than himself on

points of this nature, there was no responsibility on him; and the blame would have lain on those, who had dispensed with the ancient number in America. There may be acknowledged another reason, for being particular on this point: it is the guarding against the mischievous consequences of a disposition to irregularity in any future American bishop, who might have less concern for the peace and the order of the church, than for the sustaining of his consequence with a party.

In regard to the church in Connecticut; it had been all along an object with the author, which he never endeavoured to conceal, to bring its episcopacy within the union. But as the Scotch succession could not be officially recognized by the English bishops; he wished to complete the succession from England, before such a comprehension should take place. He knew, indeed, that bishop Provoost, although he did not appear to be possessed of personal ill will to bishop Seabury, was opposed to having any thing to do with the Scotch succession; which he did not hesitate to pronounce irregular. Yet he was very little supported in this sentiment; and least of all, by the clergy of his own diocess. It was therefore natural to infer, that he would see the expediency of what was the general wish; or, at least wave his objection for the sake of peace: as indeed happened.*

* In the last preceding convention of the church in New York, they had declared their desire, as well in favour of the succession in the English line, as for a union of the church throughout the United States, with an evident allusion to the

Although these subjects would of course have engaged the attention of the convention; yet an application which came from the church in Massachusetts, addressed to each of the three bishops, and received by the author a few days before the assembling of the convention, brought the matter forwards in a very strong point of view. The object of the address, was the procuring of the consecration of the Rev. Edward Bass of the said state, as the concurrent act of the three bishops.

For the application from Massachusetts, and for the testimonial of the consecration of bishop Seabury; see the Appendix, No. 18.

The author, had some time before written to Dr. Parker of Boston, that he considered the clergy of Massachusetts as peculiarly situated; in consequence of their never having been concerned, either in the application to England, or in that to Scotland: so that they had it in their power to act the part of mediators, in bringing the clergy of Connecticut and those of the other states together. Dr. Parker has since repeatedly declared, and it is in a letter under his hand,

Scotch episcopacy. What is now referred to, are the two following resolves, passed unanimously on the 5th of November, 1788.

"Resolved, that it is highly necessary in the opinion of this convention, that measures should be pursued to preserve the episcopal succession in the English line—and

"Resolved also, that the union of the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America is of great importance and much to be desired; and that the delegates of this state, in the next general convention, be instructed to promote that union by every prudent measure, consistent with the constitution of the church, and the continuance of the episcopal succession in the English line."

that this hint was the origin, and that the promoting of the measure mentioned was the motive, of the application for the consecration of Mr. Bass. Dr. Parker, even after the favourable close of the subsequent session, which he had attended, intimated, that the object of the application having been accomplished, he and his brethren would be indifferent as to any thing further. A confirmation of this appeared soon afterwards, in the resignation of Mr. Bass.

The application was received but a few days before the meeting of the convention, and very soon engaged the notice of that body; who, from the beginning, manifested a strong desire of complying with it. This put their president in a very delicate situation; standing alone as he did in the business, and as president of the assembled body. Many speeches were made, which implied, that the result of the deliberation must involve the acquiescence of the two bishops of the English line; while it was thought by the only one of them present, that no determination of theirs would warrant the breach of his faith impliedly pledged, as he apprehended, in consequence of measures taken by a preceding convention. Accordingly, he took occasion to state to several of the members, in the intervals of the meetings, the difficulty under which he lay. They urged the necessity, which they thought the church was under; and as to the implication involved in the first address to the English bishops; they said it was intended at the time, but prevented by unexpected occurrences in the case of Dr. Griffith. On the opposite side, no such necessity was perceived; and as to the resigna-

tion of Dr. Griffith, another might be chosen. He had been himself chosen, after the date of the letter to the English bishops. The issue of these conferences, were the resolves on the journal of this session, with a reference to the difficulty stated; and the directing of an address to the English prelates: which was accordingly drawn up, as it stands on the journal of the next session.

For the resolves and the address to the archbishops, see the Appendix, No. 19.

The author, on being consulted in regard to this expedient, saw an objection to it in the call which it made on the said prelates, to declare an opinion on the subject of the Scotch episcopacy. Perhaps they might not agree. Even if their opinion should be favourable; it must be in opposition to the positive provisions of acts of parliament, and therefore would not be officially given. For his part; the only way in which he was to be affected by the measure in contemplation, was the being relieved, at the present time, from the pain of standing opposed to the wishes of the convention.

The measure was adopted; and this seems the proper place of mentioning the result of it. When bishop Madison went to England, in the following summer, for consecration; the archbishop of Canterbury informed him, and desired him to inform the author as president of the convention, that he (the archbishop) had drawn up an answer; the sending of which would be rendered unnecessary by his (bishop Madison's) coming. The archbishop read

the answer to him; remarking, that it was painful to him to be in such circumstances, as required him to speak or write in terms, which were not an explicit declaration on the subject. In short, bishop Madison said, that the archbishop, in the answer, left the matter as he found it: which was what might have been expected, from the caution of his character; and from the circumstances of peculiar delicacy, attending this subject.*

That so little business was transacted in this session of the convention, may be seen from the journal to have been owing to the adjournment; made for the express purpose of inviting the clergy of Connecticut to meet the convention in September: an

* In an interview with the archbishop, he expressed himself to bishop Madison to the following effect, as appears from a communication of the latter to the author, dated December 19, 1790: from which the other particulars are also taken—" A few days before I left London, the archbishop requested a particular interview with me. He said, he wished to express his hopes, and also to recommend it to our church, that in such consecrations as might take place in America, the persons who had received their powers from the church of England should be alone concerned. He spoke with great delicacy of Dr. Seabury; but thought it most advisable, that the line of bishops should be handed down, from those who had received their commission from the same source."

It was afterwards supposed, that the sense of the archbishop was fully accomplished by the presence and the assistance of the canonical number of the English line: and the matter was so understood by bishop Madison. Besides, the question had changed its ground, by the repeal of the laws against the Scotish bishops; and by their reception in their proper character, in England. This happened, after bishop Madison's visit to that country.

object, which it was expected would be promoted by the conviction generally prevailing in the convention, that the formerly proposed constitution was inadequate to the situation of this church; and by the new constitution entered on the journal of this session. On this business, the president of the convention met the committee but once, and interested himself very little; being desirous, that whatever additional powers it might be thought necessary to assign to the bishops, such powers should not lie under the reproach of having been pressed for by one of the number; but be the result of due deliberation, and the free choice of all orders of persons within the church, and given with a view to her good government.*

* During the cession, there took place in the house of the author, the decease of the Rev. Dr. Griffith of Virginia. The respect entertained for him by the convention, appears in the arrangements made for attendance on his funeral as recorded on the journal. He had been much indisposed from the day of his arrival. His death, however, was in one sense sudden, and certainly unexpected to the very able physician who attended him, and with whom he had been in long habits of acquaintance. His disorder was the inflammatory rheumatism, which passed to his head during sleep. The following statement is thought due to the memory of a respectable divine, who had manifested great zeal for the organizing of the church.

It has been reported, and had weight on some minds in a more recent election to the episcopacy, that he had been under the necessity of resigning, on account of his having been elected in haste, and without due notice. The contrary is here known, and can be proved by documents in possession. His election, was in May 1786. Some private concerns, and the not being supplied with money, prevented his crossing of the Atlantic, with the two who crossed it in November of that year. In May

In the second session, the clergy who came from the eastward, besides bishop Seabury, were two of his presbyters, Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Jarvis, from Connecticut; and Dr. Parker, from Massachusetts. All things now appeared to tend to an happy union.

But a danger arose from an unexpected question, on the very day of the arrival of these gentlemen. The danger was on the score of politics. Some lay members of the convention—two of them were known, and perhaps there were more—having obtained information, that bishop Seabury, who had been chaplain to a British regiment during the war, was now in the receipt of half-pay, entertained scruples in regard to the propriety of admitting him as a

1787, about a year after his election, and about a month after the return of the bishops consecrated in England, there was held a convention in Virginia, from the printed journal of which the following is an extract:

"Resolved, that the standing committee, without delay, request of the right reverend Dr. White, bishop of the protestant episcopal church in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the right reverend Dr. Provoost, bishop of the said church in the state of New York, that they, or either of them, admit to consecration the Rev. Dr. Griffith, nominated by the last convention bishop of the church in this state."

The standing committee were the Rev. Dr. Madison, the Rev. Mr. Bracken, the Rev. Mr. Shield, the Hon. John Blair, Mr. Page of Rosewell, and Mr. Andrews. The prominent applicant to the American bishops was Dr. Madison, who was afterwards bishop. The principle on which the bishops declined compliance, has been set forth in its proper place; being their opinion, that they were pledged to their first obtaining of three bishops from England.

member of the convention. One of the gentlemen took the author aside, at a gentleman's house where several of the convention were dining, and stated to him this difficulty. His opinion—it is hoped the right one—was, That an ecclesiastical body needed not to be over-righteous, or more so than civil bodies, on such a point—That he knew of no law of the land, which the circumstance relative to a former chaplaincy contradicted—That indeed there was an article in the confederation, then the bond of union of the states, providing that no citizen of theirs should receive any title of nobility from a foreign power: a provision not extending to the receipt of money; which seemed impliedly allowed, indeed, in the guard provided against the other—That bishop Seabury's half-pay was a compensation for former services, and not for any now expected of him—That it did not prevent his being a citizen, with all the rights attached to the character, in Connecticut—And that should he or any person in the like circumstances be returned a member of congress from that state, he must necessarily be admitted of their body. The gentleman to whom the reasoning was addressed, seemed satisfied; and either from this or from some other cause, the objection was not brought forward. The author very much apprehended, that the contrary would happen; not because of the prejudices of the gentleman who addressed him on the subject; but because of those of another, who had started the difficulty.

On the day succeeding that of the above conversation, the committee was appointed, as stated on the minutes, to confer with the eastern gentlemen, on a plan of union. They met in the evening; and found no difficulty in joining in the report, as made the next day in the convention. The subsequent adoption of the report, with the reservation as to the negative of the bishops, leads to the remark, that from the sentiments expressed in the debate, there is reason to believe that the full negative would have been allowed; had not Mr. Andrews, from Virginia, very seriously, and doubtless very sincerely, expressed his apprehension, that it was so far beyond what was expected by the church in his state, as would cause the measure to be there disowned. The desire that Mr. Andrews had all along shown to effect the union, and the good temper with which he had treated every subject of discussion, gave the greater force to his apprehensions: the consequence of which was, the referring of the subject of the full negative to some subsequent general convention; to be determined according to instructions from the conventions in the several states. The eastern gentlemen acquiesced, but reluctantly, in this compromise. Had there been no more than their apprehension of laws passing by a majority of four fifths, after a non-concurrence of the bishops; the extreme improbability of this would—it is thought—have been confessed by them. But the truth is—They thought that the frame of ecclesiastical government could hardly be

called episcopal, while such a matter was held out as speculatively possible.*

For the constitution as proposed by the session of July and August, and as acceeded to in this session by bishop Seabury and the presbyters from Connecticut and Boston, see the Appendix, No. 20.

No sooner had the convention divided into two houses; than an incident happened in the house of clerical and lay deputies, which had an unpropitious influence on all that followed: and as the result of the deliberations of both houses was, in many points, owing to this incident, occasion is taken to relate it, on recollection; after having been an hearer in the house of clerical and lay deputies at the time.

In the appointment of committees, on the different departments of the book of Common Prayer;

* The case of Mr. Andrews of Virginia, is a strong proof of the laxity in regard to due order and discipline, under which it was necessary to begin the organization of the church. He was a first cousin of the Rev. Dr. Andrews, with whom and with the author he had been a student in the college of Philadelphia. At the time in question, he was a professor in the college of Williamsburg in Virginia. Although in priests' orders, he had discontinued his ministry, and acted in some civil employments of responsibility, with reputation. He was a very sensible and a very amiable man, in his temper and deportment. He had, doubtless, in some way reconciled his departure from the clerical character, with a sincere desire of settling the concerns of the church, and of contributing his best endeavours to that effect. Certain it is that they were directed, not to the pulling down, but to the building up of the church, the ministry of which he had forsaken. Probably, he was the easier reconciled to this measure, by the almost total prostration of the church in Virginia, during the war of the revolution.

Dr. Parker proposed, that the English book should be the ground of the proceedings to be held; without any reference to that set out and proposed in 1785. This was objected to by some; who contended, that a liturgy ought to be formed, without reference to any existing book; although with liberty to take from any, whatever the convention should think fit. The issue of the debate, was the wording of the resolves, as they stand on the journal; in which the different committees are appointed, to prepare a morning and evening prayer—to prepare a litany—to prepare a communion service—and the same, in regard to the other departments; instead of its being said—to alter the said services: which had been the language in 1785.

This was very unreasonable; because the different congregations of the church were always understood to be possessed of a liturgy; before the consecration of her bishops, or the existence of her conventions. It would have been thought a strange doctrine in any of the clergy, had they pretended, that they were released from all obligation to the use of the book of Common Prayer, by the revolution. It is true, that Dr. Parker had carried the matter too far, in speaking of the proposed book, as a form of which they could know nothing; considering that it had been proposed by a preceding convention from a majority of the states. It was particularly wondered at in Dr. Parker; by those who knew, that he had used the book in his own church at Boston. But as the doctor, during the preceding part of the session, had been looked to for the opening of the sentiments of

the clergy present from Connecticut, who had said but little all along, and evidently depended on him, to press the points which they had most at heart; it is probable, that in this instance, he accommodated more than was either necessary or well considered, to make matters agreeable to their minds. The direct course would have been, to have taken the English liturgy, as that in which some alterations were contemplated; and with it, the other as a proposal, agreeably to what was expressed in the title page. Certain it is, that the extreme proposed tended very much to the opposite extreme, which took effect—an evident implication in all the proceedings of the house, that there were no forms of prayer, no offices, and no rubrics, until they should be formed by the convention now assembled. Every one must perceive, that this abridged the species of negative, lodged with the house of bishops. For if, in any branch of the liturgy, they should be disposed to be tenacious in any point, which should be a deviation from the English book; the consequence must be, not that the prayer, or whatever else it were, remained as before, but that no such matter were to be inserted. This, in some instances, would have operated to the extent of excluding a whole office of the church, if the negative of the bishops had been insisted on. They did not carry their right so far; but they reasoned and expostulated on the point, with several of the gentlemen, to no purpose. They would not allow, that there was any book of authority, in existence: a mode of proceeding, in which they have acted differ-

ently from the conventions before and after them; who have recognized the contrary principle when any matter occurred to which it was applicable. If that adopted by the majority of the house of clerical and lay deputies had been acted on by the clergy and by the individual congregations, on the taking place of the civil revolution, it would have torn the church to pieces. On the contrary, the idea had prevailed, that although the civil part of the institution was destroyed, and each christian minister lay under the necessity to discharge the scriptural duty of praying for his civil rulers, according to his individual discretion; the rest of the service remained entire, on the ground of antecedent obligation.

The forms of proceeding in the house of bishops, consisting of two only—Bishop Provoost, although absent, being considered as making up the constitutional number—were soon settled. They were drafted by the author, and he seized the opportunity of preventing all discussions at any time—for this he hoped for as the effect—on the point of precedency; by resting the matter on the seniority of episcopal consecration: which, of course, made Bishop Seabury the president of the house. This regulation, was agreeable to the judgment of the author; which is not altered, although a different principle was adopted at the next convention, and acted on for a time. The only plausible objection heard to the other—which, however, lies equally against that afterwards adopted —is the possible case of the presidency's devolving on a bishop, who may be disqualified for the duties of it, by mental or by bodily infirmities. But in this

case, a vice president, or a president pro tempore might be appointed.

The principal act of this session was the preparing of the Book of Common Prayer, as now the established liturgy of the church. It will not be noticed any further, than, on the ground of information possessed, to account for the doing or for the omitting of any important matter. The journal shows, that some parts of it were drawn up by the house of clerical and lay deputies, and other parts of it, by the house of bishops. In the latter, owing to the smallness of the number and a disposition in both of them to accommodate, business was despatched with great celerity; as must be seen by any one, who attends to the progress of the subjects recorded on the Journal. To this day, there are recollected with satisfaction, the hours which were spent with Bishop Seabury on the important subjects which came before them; and especially the christian temper which he manifested all along.

In the daily prayer for morning and evening service; the principal subjects of difference arising between the two houses, were the Athanasian creed, and the descent into hell in the apostles' creed.

On the former subject, the author consented to the proposal of Bishop Seabury, of making it an amendment to the draft sent by the other house; to be inserted with a rubric, permitting the use of it. This however was declared to be on the principle of accommodation, to the many who were reported to desire it, especially in Connecticut; where, it was said,

the omitting of it would hazard the reception of the book. It was the author's intention, never to read the creed himself; and he declared his mind to that effect. Bishop Seabury, on the contrary, thought that without it, there would be a difficulty in keeping out of the church the errors to which it stands opposed. In answer to this, there were urged the instances of several churches, as the Lutheran and others in this country and in Europe; and above all, the instance of the widely extended Greek church, confessedly tenacious of the doctrine of the Nicene creed; and yet not possessed of the Athanasian in any liturgy, or even of an acknowledgment of it in any confession of faith. Of the last mentioned instance, Bishop Seabury entertained a doubt: but the fact is certainly so; as is attested by the Rev. John Smith, an English divine held in estimation; who wrote "an account of the Greek church," with the advantage of having resided in Constantinople. He says (p. 196) after mention of the apostles' creed and the Nicene—"as to that of St. Athanasius, they are wholly strangers to it." However, the creed was inserted by way of amendment; to be used or omitted at discretion. But the amendment was negatived, by the other house: and when the subject afterwards came up in conference, they would not allow of the creed in any shape; which was thought intolerant by the gentlemen from New England; who, with Bishop Seabury, gave it up with great reluctance.

The other subject—the descent of Christ into hell—was left in a situation, which afterwards not a little

embarassed the committee, who had the charge of printing the book. The amendments of the bishops, whether verbal or other, to the services sent to the other house, had all been numbered. The president of that house, as afterwards appeared on unquestionable verbal testimony, accidentally omitted the reading of the article in its full force, with the explanatory rubric. The meaning of the article in that place, was declared to be the state of the dead, generally: and this was proposed, instead of the form in which the other house had presented it, in italics and between hooks, with a rubric permitting the use of the words—"He went into the place of departed spirits." The paper of the house, in return to that of the bishops, said nothing on this head; and therefore their acquiescence was presumed. This might have been the easier supposed; as there were some, who, while they thought but little of the importance of inserting such an article, were yet of opinion, that the convention stood pledged, on the present subject, to the English Bishops: it being the only one on which they had laid much stress, in stating the terms on which they were willing to consecrate for our church; and we having complied with their wishes, in that respect. This would seem very unsuitably followed by a repetition of the offensive measure, or something very like it, in the first convention held after the consecration had been obtained. Thus, the matter passed without further notice. But Bishop Seabury, before he left the city, conceived a suspicion, that there had been a misunderstanding. For on the evening before

his departure, he took the author aside from company, and mentioned his apprehension; which was treated as groundless, on the full belief that it was so. It was a point, which Bishop Seabury had much at heart; from an opinion, that the article was put into the creed, in opposition to the Apollinarian heresy; and that therefore, the withdrawing of it was an indirect encouragement of the same. The author saw no such inference; but wished to retain the article, on the ground, that the doing so would tend to peace; that it would be acting consistently towards the English church; and that a latitude would be left by the proposed rubric, for the understanding of the article as refering to the state of departed spirits, generally. It is curious to remark by the way, that when the book came out, Bishop Provoost disliked the form in which this part of it appeared, more than either the article as it stood originally, or the omitting of it altogether: on the principle, that it exacted a belief of the existence of departed spirits, between death and the resurrection. So easy is it, in extending latitude of sentiment on one side, to limit it on another.

However, when the committee assembled to prepare the book for the press, great was their surprise and that of the author, to find that the two houses had misunderstood one another altogether. The question was—what is to be done? And here, the different principles on which the business had been conducted, had their respective operation. The committee contended, that the amendment made by the bishops to the service as proposed by their house,

not appearing to have been presented; the service must stand as proposed by them, with the words "he descended into hell" printed in italics and between hooks; and with the rubric permissory of the use of the words—"he went into the place of departed spirits." On the contrary it was thought a duty to maintain the principle, that the creed, as in the English book, must be considered as the creed of the church, until altered by the consent of both houses; which was not yet done. Accordingly, remonstrance was made against the printing of the article of the descent into hell, in the manner in which it appears in the book published at that time.

When the convention afterwards met in New York, in the year 1792, this matter came in review before them: and the result, was the ordering of the creed to be printed in all future editions, with the article not in italics and between hooks as before; but with the rubric leaving it to discretion to use or to omit it; or to use, instead of it, the words considered by the rubric as synonymous. Some such composition, seemed to be rendered absolutely necessary by existing circumstances.

The importance given to this article by the requisition of the English prelates, and the litigation which it has consequently undergone in our conventions, induce the being particular in regard to it. Therefore, as the delivery of opinion on the subject will fall within the design of these sheets; it is proposed to recur to it again, before the finishing of remarks on the transactions of this convention.

As connected with the morning and evening prayers, the reading psalms come under notice in this place; and the following information is to be given concerning them.

The house of bishops did not approve of the expedient of the other house, in relation to the selections as they now stand; to be used at the discretion of the minister, instead of the psalms for the day. But Bishop Seabury interested himself in the subject the less; as knowing, that neither himself nor any of his clergy would make use of the alternative, but that they would adhere to the old practice. For the author's part, he disliked the course taken; from the opinion, that it was less likely to be satisfactory than another expedient suggested by him, for the improving of this part of the service; which, in his opinion, called for it more than any other. The expedient, was to give to the officiating minister the liberty to select psalms at his discretion. This would be attended—he thought—with the advantage of breaking the practice of reading the psalms, without any regard to their suitableness to the general circumstances and state of mind of a mixed congregation; and yet, not hazard such capricious omissions of particular passages, as might be construed by some into a disrespectful treatment of holy writ; and thus prevented all improvement in this branch of the service. Another consequence would be, that, the number and the length of the psalms depending on the choice of the minister, there would be great encouragement to the introduction of the practice of singing this part

of the service, instead of repeating the verses by the minister and the clerk alternately. As to the selections made, he considers some of the omissions of particular verses as very capricious; and the selections in general as having added to the length of the morning and evening prayer, instead of shortening them; an object confessedly proper to be kept in view. They were indeed made with too little deliberation; of which there needs not to be given any stronger proof, than that the selections which stand as the 7th and the 8th were proposed by the house of bishops, at his desire, as an amendment. The excellency of the psalms overlooked by gentlemen of judgment and taste, is a proof, that the time and the care bestowed on the work were not proportioned to its importance. The proposal for the inserting of them, was owing to the desire of having the printed selections, since there were to be such, to contain as many of the psalms as were suited to the ordinary devotions of a congregation. The selections which the bishops made contained whole psalms, on the principle already stated. The other house accepted them as sent; only that they excluded one verse, from the 84th psalm. But this subject has been spoken to more particularly, in a former department of the present work.

There has been already expressed the opinion, that this part of the service requires improvement, as much as any. The author earnestly wishes to see the time, when it may be established on the principles of rational piety and good taste. But there are

great difficulties in the way. On the one hand there are very many, who remain attached to the old practice of reading all the psalms, according to the daily arrangement. Against this, besides the objection so often made, that some of them have more of the severity of the legal, than of the mercy of the evangelical dispensation; there is the circumstance, that a very great proportion of these compositions are expressive of peculiar states of mind; no one of which can be supposed descriptive of any body of people, convened on a common occasion of devotion. Accordingly, the parts referred to seem to be not suited to such an occasion; however admirably they may be so for the private prayer and thanksgiving of particular persons. As to the plea of antiquity; little stress is to be laid on it, unless it could be proved, that the psalms were so used in the earliest ages of the church; the contrary to which is here taken to be the fact.

But although these objections lie, as is conceived, against the past practice; there is such a propensity manifested to the extreme of hypercriticism, as is calculated to bring reproach on every temperate reform of this part of the service. The selections in the present Prayer Book, had they consisted of entire Psalms, would have been much more generally used than they are at present. In saying this, it is not intended to object to collections of verses, made with a professed reference to particular subjects; a beautiful instance of which—it is spoken of as a mere matter of taste—is in the English Prayer Book, in the hymn in the 30th of January service, to be

used instead of the "Venite." But it is wished to distinguish between a selection, made with a reference to a particular subject; and rejection, on a supposed unfitness for any act of Christian devotion.

In the service for the administration of the communion; it may perhaps be expected, that the great change made, in restoring to the consecration prayer the oblatory words and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, left out in king Edward's reign, must at least have produced an opposition. But no such thing happened to any considerable extent; or at least, the author did no hear of any in the other house, further than a disposition to the effect in a few gentlemen, which was counteracted by some pertinent remarks of the president. In that of the bishops, it lay very near to the heart of bishop Seabury. As for the other bishop, without conceiving with some, that the service as it stood was essentially defective, he always thought there was a beauty in those ancient forms, and can discover no superstition in them. If indeed they could have been reasonably thought to imply, that a Christian minister is a priest, in the sense of an offerer of sacrifice, and that the table is an altar and the elements a sacrifice, in any other than figurative senses, he would have zealously opposed the admission of such unevangelical sentiments—as he conceives them to be. The English reformers carefully exploded every thing of this sort, at the time of their issuing of the first book of Common Prayer, which contained the oblation and the invocation. Although they were left out on a subsequent review;

yet it is known to have been done at the instance of two learned foreigners; and in order to avoid what was thought the appearance of encouragement of the superstition, which had been done away. The restoring of those parts of the service by the American church, has been since objected to by some few among us. To shew that a superstitious sense must have been intended, they have laid great stress on the printing of the words "which we now offer unto thee," in a different character from the rest of the prayers. But this was mere accident. The bishops, being possessed of the form used in the Scotch episcopal church, which they had altered in some respects; refered to it, to save the trouble of copying. But the reference was not intended to establish any particular manner of printing; and accordingly, in all the editions of the Prayer Book since the first, the aforesaid words have been printed in the same character with the rest of the prayer, without any deviation from the original appointment. Bishop Seabury's attachment to these changes, may be learned from the following incident. On the morning of the Sunday which occurred during the session of the convention, the author wished him to consecrate the elements. This he declined. On the offer being again made at the time when the service was to begin, he still declined; and, smiling, added—To confess the truth, I hardly consider the form to be used, as strictly amounting to a consecration. The form was of course that used heretofore; the changes not having taken effect. These sentiments he had adopted, in his

visit to the bishops from whom he received his episcopacy.

In the occasional services, there was so little difference of opinion, that nothing interesting is recollected.

Although the canons, published at the last convention, came under review in this, and received alterations and additions; yet, there was no memorable incident connected with them. They passed in the other house, almost the same as they were drawn up and sent to them by the bishops.

When it was intimated, that there should again be a recurrence to the article in the apostles' creed; this was with the view of delivering sentiments entertained on the subject, as expressed in the following letter to bishop Seabury; written at the crisis of the difficulty, which arose on the appearance of the misunderstanding.

Philadelphia, December 1789.

Right Reverend and Dear Sir,

I received your friendly letter of October 11th, and laid it before the committee; who have expressed no formal determination on the subject; although it appears to me to be the sense of the members, that they cannot recede from the proposal of the house of clerical and lay deputies.

Having revolved the matter most seriously in my mind, I have thought that it might serve the two purposes of a friendly communication with you, and of leaving a record of the principles on which I act; if

I exhibit, as briefly as possible, and without citing authorities, a general view of my sentiments on the point: I shall arrange them under these heads—the history of the article—its merits as a Scripture question—and the present state of it in this church.

As to its history; I take its first appearance in a particular creed, to have been as stated in the preface to the proposed book; and to have meant no more than burial. The archbishops tell us, that it was inserted in opposition to an ancient heresy—meaning the Apollinarian. I cannot find, although I formerly took some pains for the purpose, any avowed reference of this sort. Nevertheless, as Christ's descent into hell, before the insertion of the article, was unquestionably appealed to by the Catholics, as a confutation of the heresy; I should not be surprised to find evidence of its being inserted with a view to that. Further, the universal and uncontradicted prevalence of the belief of the descent in the beginning of the fifth century, notwithstanding the whims with which it became connected, is of no small support to the opinion, in the strictest and to some the most offensive sense of the words. Here, as it is connected with the subject, let me mention what I take to be the meaning of the Hebrew word שאול and the Greek word ἅδης. The former signifies, sometimes, merely the grave; and sometimes, most evidently to my mind, a place of unhappiness. Ἅδης generally conveys the last mentioned idea. Although some passages may be found, in which it is applied to a future state indeterminately; yet I take it to be the

opinion of our best judges, that its general and proper meaning is the dominion of Satan or a place of torment. But not to digress too far; I hold it to be an unquestionable fact, that from the time of the general prevalence of the article in question, as superadded to the burial, it was universally understood in the strict sense; and so continued to the time of the reformation; was then adopted by our church in the same sense; although afterwards, by dropping the reference to the place in St. Peter, she left more latitude as to the precise manner of explaining the article.

This brings me to my second particular—the merits of the article, as a Scripture question. Here, truth and candour require me to acknowledge, that they who hold the doctrine in the strict sense of the words, have much to say. It takes off most of the obscurity of the place in St. Peter, above alluded to; which, otherwise, seems incoherent and unintelligible. There is another passage in the next chapter (iv. 6.) which, on this construction, is natural and of obvious meaning; but of which I never met with any other tolerable interpretation. The passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians, which we read in the ordination service, has been otherwise ingeniously interpreted; but with a very forced and unnatural interpretation of the words—"the lower parts of the earth;" and with the entire loss of connexion with the quotation from the Old Testament. The passage Col. ii. 15. has also a leaning this way. That in the sixteenth Psalm, if we consider it a mere pro-

phecy concerning our Saviour, may mean his resurrection only: for the word "soul" is often put for person, and sometimes for the mere body in the Old Testament. As to the repetition, it is agreeable to a well known characteristic of eastern poetry. But if —which seems the most reasonable—we take the prophecy to relate immediately to David, although remotely and completely to the Messiah; the beautiful verses which follow, show the psalmist's expectation of spiritual happiness, antecedently to and independently on resurrection. Accordingly, they give an aspect to the verse in question, of pertaining—in its remote sense—as well to the soul as to the body of the Redeemer.

But although, for the above reasons, the doctrine seems probable in its strict sense; yet, considering that the passages are few, that they are obscure, and that they are introduced incidentally—except the last, which admits of another interpretation; and that the sense does not appear, like the divinity, the incarnation, the humanity, and the atonement of Christ, as a leading truth of holy Writ, I do not wish to have it required, as an essential of Christian faith: and I think, that the article may very well be so softened and explained, as that the use may be understood, whatever be the form, to express no more than the passing into a place of departed spirits. There would seem to be no objection to this; since ᾅδης sometimes means the invisible state, without any appropriation to happiness or misery; agreeably to the use of it among the Greeks, from whom the

word was taken. The truth of the doctrine, with this latitude, rests on passages more explicit than those quoted; and indeed, on the whole analogy of our faith. Into the proof of this, I do not go; not understanding it to be in dispute among us. However, I will not affirm the necessity of making it, although true, an article in so short a composition as the apostles' creed. As to the absurd tenet of the Apollinarians, it might be guarded against in another way, more conveniently and more explicitly. Therefore the matter of retaining or omitting rests, in my mind, chiefly on the footing of usefulness and expediency. If retained, as explained in our amendment, it will not contradict any principle, to which regard should be had among us. If omitted, it will be liable to many inconveniences, to be pointed out under the third branch of the subject, to which I now pass—the present state of the article in our church.

It appears most unquestionable to my understanding, that if a person of good sense, but a stranger to what has passed on the subject, and entirely indifferent to the question, were to make out a copy for the printer from the papers prepared by the convention, the copy would be agreeable to our amendment. Yet this would be a very ineligible footing, on which to rest the matter; because the members of the house of clerical and lay deputies might truly declare, that they never meant it. And it would appear in full proof, that the amendment was never read to them.

If the above should make the whole transaction null; the obvious inference is, that we revert to the English book, in this point: for as to the position, that we have no creed, nor any other service, until framed by a convention; it appears to me of such dangerous tendency, and is so inconsistent with the proceedings of former general conventions, and those of all the state conventions in my possession; that its being the opinion of a majority of the members of the late general convention, will never justify me to my own conscience, in making it a ground of conduct. On the contrary, I hold it to be my duty to God and the church, to presume the opposite; as the present known profession of our communion.

What then is the sense of the church of England in this matter? The archbishops, in their communication, allude to such a declared sense. But with the utmost deference to so high an authority, I never could find it in any institutions of that church. As to her writers, they differ widely from one another. Dr. Fiddes is a strong advocate for the strict sense of the words. Dr. Barrow prefers the making of them synonymous with burial. Bishops Pearson and Burnet, are for the sense comprehended by the proposed marginal note and rubric. Yet we may gather from them all, that the strict sense was the original meaning. And my only objection to leaving the matter as we found it, is the rigor of requiring the belief of it in that high sense. For although I should fear to insert any thing in opposition to it—"lest haply we be found to fight against God"—yet on the

other hand, it is involved in so much difficulty as to make me equally fear the being, by the requisition of it, "wise above what is written." The latter may perhaps be objected to the English creed, without some explanatory extension: for notwithstanding all that was said concerning "hell" being synonymous with "a place of departed spirits," without especial application to a state of unhappiness, I take the fact to be generally otherwise.

But now, if this reasoning should be wrong, and the matter should be supposed to rest, agreeably to the sense of the committee, who contend, that by rejecting our rubric they retain their own, and that the body of the creed should be altered accordingly; I proceed to state the bad consequences of their plan.

1st. As the article is acceptable to many, on the principle of its combating of a glaring error, I would not even seem to countenance that error; when the difficulty complained of might have been removed without any absurdity, or the contradicting of the principles of any members of our church.

2dly. The referring of the alternative to the choice of the respective churches, whether it be meant to those in the different states collectively, or to the congregations separately, threatens in either case much dangerous litigation.

3dly. Without entering into the question, how far a convention are bound by the proceedings of their predecessors, so far as the same persons are concerned at this time, in reversing what they did in October 1786, and considering the circumstances of

the case; it does not square with my ideas of good faith: although in saying this, I only look at the effect of it on my own situation.

4thly. At a time when our church is not in secure possession of the episcopacy, it is highly imprudent to take any measures, which may impede us in that business.

5thly. On the plan proposed, it will require a stronger exertion of ecclesiastical authority than hitherto, to prevent different ways in the same church, in the case of a stranger's officiating: whose departure from the usage of that particular church, would tend to distract the minds of the people.

6thly. There are proofs on this very point, that gentlemen may resolve on such matters in convention; and yet, in their respective cures, may not have constancy to carry them into effect: which tends to throw on others the odious appearance, of being singularly forward in innovation.

7thly. We shall have the less to justify ourselves in the event of the inconveniences apprehended, because of the general acceptation of this article of the creed: it being retained by the Roman Catholics, by the Lutheran churches, and by the Presbyterians of all descriptions, besides others.

And now, after all these difficulties, the question is—What is to be done? I know not. But if the committee are so confident of the goodness of their construction, as to make it the foundation of their printing of the book; at the same time admitting—as they have done—a declaration from me annexed

to the record, that my signing of the morning prayer is not to be construed as involving an acknowledgment of the consent of the house of bishops to that matter; I am very willing to promise, on the condition of being thus not answerable for the consequences, to throw no impediment in the way of the book on that account; but on the contrary, to give it all the support in my power; making use, however, in common with others, of the latitude allowed in this instance by the book itself.

I must however, my dear sir, with the freedom which I hope will subsist between us, confess to you, that I feel most sensibly a difficulty to which in this and in a very few other particulars, I am subjected by the late fixture of the constitution. So far as the making of the bishops a separate house tended to conciliate our eastern brethren, I rejoice in it, as for the good of the church. And so far as it lately gave me much of your company and conversation, I remember it with peculiar personal satisfaction. I think further, that on this plan, matters are more likely to be matured, than on that of a single house. But it is a dictate of natural justice, that there should be no apparent, where there is no real responsibility. If any one should compare the constitution, with the known fact and general persuasion of our having before a liturgy; he will presume of a majority of the house of bishops, that is, in the present case, of all of the order present, that they were in their judgments favourable to all the alterations made. This, you know, was not the fact. And although, in regard

to the points given up, I shall think nothing of them; if, in the event, the great good should be accomplished, of having one service for the church in these states; yet I wish, that the thing had been otherwise contrived, as to that same responsibility. And if the operation be an hard one, in relation to matters to which we gave our sanction, although we wished them otherwise; it will be more so, on a point to which we have given no sanction. Still, I know of no expedient besides that suggested.

You will rejoice to find, that I have nothing to add on a subject, on which I must have been at this time very tedious to you: and therefore, I conclude myself, your affectionate brother,

WM. WHITE.

Right Rev. Bishop Seabury.

K. Page 25. *Of the Convention in* 1792.

The bishops present at this convention, were bishops Seabury, White, Provoost, Madison, and, after consecration, Claggett.

Bishop Provoost presided in the house of bishops, and Dr. William Smith of Pennsylvania in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries of the two houses were, of the former first the Rev. Samuel Keene, and afterwards the Rev. Leonard Cutting; and of the latter, the Rev. John Bisset.

The occasion was opened, by a sermon from bishop Seabury; agreeably to the desire of the last convention.

An unpropitious circumstance attended the opening of this convention; but was happily removed, before proceeding to business. Bishop Seabury and bishop Provoost had never, when the former had been in New York at different times since his consecration, exchanged visits. Although the author knows of no personal offence, that had ever passed from either of them to the other, and indeed was assured of the contrary by them both; yet the notoriety, that bishop Provoost had denied the validity of bishop Seabury's consecration, accounted at least for the omission of the attentions of a visit, on either side. This very thing had not been without its consequences, on the proceeding of the conventions: which is here stated, as a caution against such partial considerations, acted on without due deliberation, and producing inconsistencies of conduct. For in the convention of June 1786, on the question of denying the validity of bishop Seabury's ordinations, the vote of New York is "Aye," although it was well known, that two of the three clergymen from that state had paid attentions to Dr. Seabury, as a bishop; and that he stood high in their esteem. But they acted under instructions from the church in their state; when the convention of it was of a complexion, corresponding with that vote. Afterwards, in the general convention of 1789, the convention of New York having been, at its preceding meeting, composed principally of gentlemen of an opposite sentiment on this subject, the deputies from that state were among the foremost in producing the resolu-

to n then come into, of recognizing bishop Seabury's episcopal character.

But to return to the narrative. The prejudices in the minds of the two bishops were such, as threatened a distance between them: which would give an unfavourable appearance to themselves, and to the whole body; and might perhaps have an evil influence on their deliberations. But it happened otherwise. On a proposal being made to them by common friends, and through the medium of the present author, on the suggestion of Dr. Smith, they consented without the least hesitation, bishop Seabury to pay, and bishop Provoost to receive the visit, which etiquette enjoined on the former to the latter; and was as readily accepted by the one, as it had been proffered by the other. The author was present, when it took place. Bishop Provoost asked his visitant to dine with him on the same day, in company of the author and others. The invitation was accepted; and from that time, nothing was perceived in either of them, which seemed to show, that the former distance was the result of any thing else, than difference in opinion.

There was another matter, which threatened the excitement of personal resentments; but it was got over, as happily as the preceding.

When the bishops met in the vestry room of Trinity church, on Wednesday the 12th of September; it appeared, that bishops Provoost and Madison were dissatisfied with the rule in regard to the presidency, as established in 1789. As the house were

divided on the question of repealing the rule, it would have stood. But this might have been construed into an ungenerous advantage of the prior meeting; in which, those now in the negative had voices, and the others had none. The day passed over without any determination; which was not productive of inconvenience; the morning being principally occupied by the religious service, and the convention not meeting in the afternoon. The next morning, the author received a message from bishop Seabury; requesting a meeting in private, before the hour of the convention. It took place at Dr. Moore's, where he lodged. He opened his mind to this effect—That from the course taken by the two other bishops on the preceding day, he was afraid they had in contemplation the debarring of him from any hand in the consecration, expected to take place during this convention—That he could not submit to this, without an implied renunciation of his consecration, and contempt cast on the source from which he had received it—And that the apprehended measure, if proposed and persevered in, must be followed by an entire breach with him, and, as he supposed, with the church under his superintendance.

The author expressed his persuasion, that no such design was entertained, either by bishop Provoost or by bishop Madison; and his determination, that if it were, it should not have his concurrence. He believed they wished, as he also did, to have three bishops present under the English consecration, whenever such an occasion, as that now ex-

pected, should occur. The being united in the act with a bishop who should consecrate through another line, would not weaken the English chain. In regard to the question of presidency, on which bishop Seabury had intimated that he should not be tenacious; the author told him, that his opinion being the same as in 1789, he could not consistently vote for the reversing of the rule; which, if it were done, he thought had best be by the absence that morning of one of the two now conversing; and that should bishop Seabury think it proper in this way to wave his right under the rule, the author pledged himself, that in no event would he have an hand in the ensuing consecration, if it were to be accompanied by the rejection of bishop Seabury's assistance in it; although there was still entertained the persuasion, that no such measure would be thought of, as indeed proved to be the fact. Hands were given, in testimony of mutual consent in this design. He absented himself that morning, and the rule was altered, in the manner related on the journal: that is, for the presidency to go in rotation, beginning from the north; which made bishop Provoost the president on the present occasion.

At the opening of this convention, it was no small satisfaction to many, to find lay-deputies from Connecticut. The aversion entertained by the clergy in that state, to this part of the institution in the more southern, had been one of the principal impediments to an union: and when it was at last effected, it was with a latitude to them in this article. Some of the

laity, at the time, were afraid that this would be the beginning of rejecting them entirely. But the event ought to be noticed; as a proof, that forbearance and mutual toleration are at least sometimes a shorter way to unity, than severity and stiffness.

On the subject of the Prayer Book, there was nothing which could properly come before the convention without another review; and this was not intended, except the seeing that the book had been properly executed. In the correcting of any thing amiss touching this matter, there could be no ground of difference, except in the article of the descent into hell, which had been settled as already related; and the subject of the exclusive copy-right of the book; which had been granted by the committee, in order to render the book the cheaper, and to raise a small sum for a charitable use; which two objects they thought consistent with one another; and further, to secure the faithful printing of the book. The measure, however, was generally censured and was reversed.

The alterations of the ordinal, were prepared by the bishops. There was no material difference of opinion; except in regard to the words used by the bishop at the ordination of priests—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—and "Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." Bishop Seabury, who alone was tenacious of this form, consented at last, with great reluctance, to allow the alternative of another as it now stands. The objections to the use made of

the aforesaid expressions—the author here speaks his own sense only, not answering for that of any other bishop—were as follow:

As to the first—"Receive ye the Holy Ghost," it is supposed to express the conveyance of the ministerial character; which St. Paul recognizes as the gift of the spirit. 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. i. 6. and Eph. iv. 8. 11. And as to the expressions—"whose sins &c," he supposes it to relate, according to the intention of the service, principally, under due regulation, to the power of passing ecclesiastical censures and of releasing from them; and partly, to the declaring of the forgiveness of sins, repented of and forsaken: such forgiveness not to apply, independently on the sincerity of the receiver. But although each of the expressions will thus admit of a good interpretation, which should be given by the clergy as occasion may call for it; yet the words are not necessarily to be used in preference to every other form, in the very act of conveying the ministerial commission. If they are not necessary, they cannot be so proper in the place in which they stand, as some other words of more obvious signification. There seems the less reason to stickle for the last of the two clauses, as it was not of very early use in the church.

It may be proper to record—what would not otherwise appear from the journal—that the greater part of the time of the house of clerical and lay deputies was taken up with debates on the proposed absolute negative of the bishops; but without any interference on their part. The debates ended in what

appears on the journal of the house of clerical and lay deputies, Saturday September 15—its being notified to the churches, that it was proposed to determine on the subject at the next convention.

On the subject of the articles, the author will begin with the opinions of the bishops in regard to the general question, so far as they are within his knowledge: and his beginning with his own opinion, is merely because of the complexion which it may perhaps be supposed to give to the facts to be narrated.

He professed himself an advocate for articles; the abolishing of which would, he thought, only leave with every pastor of a congregation the right of judging of orthodoxy, according to his discretion or his prejudices; while the articles determine that matter by a rule, issuing from the public authority of the church.

When the question has been put—whether the 39 articles are the best rule that can be devised; he has answered, that he thought them better than any other, likely to be obtained under present circumstances. Conventional business is too much hurried, and the members of the conventions are not sufficiently retired from other avocations, for the entering on determinations of this magnitude. Even if the greater number of the body should be conceded to be sufficiently learned for the work; ecclesiastical legislation has not been of sufficiently long standing in this church, to have established the characters of those who exercise it, as to this point, in the estimation of the world. Until such a character shall be

established; a few obstinate or factious men will overset, in their respective congregations, what shall have been enacted in convention. Besides, many persons among the laity, and some even among the clergy, had declared their determination to abide by the articles at all events: which made it much to be feared that a schism would take place, whenever any material change should be determined on. In this case, they who should adhere to the articles, would claim their relation to the church of England; while it would be questionable, whether the others would have any permanent tie among themselves.

Therefore, the author wished for an adherence to the 39 articles; not excepting the general principles maintained in the political parts of them; but with an exception, in the ratification, of the local application of the said parts, according to the letter of them. But he did not wish to have the articles signed, as in England, according to the tenor of the 36th canon of that church. He preferred the resting of the obligation of them on the promise made at ordination, as required by the 7th article of the constitution, considered as sufficient by the English bishops: which would render them articles of peace, as they are sometimes said to be in the church of England; but not with such evident propriety, as they would then be in the American church. As the author approves of the general tenor of the 39 articles; he trusted, that however he might have supposed, in his private judgment, the possibility of omitting some of them and of altering others to advantage; yet not perceiv-

ing a probability, either that such a change, if made, would have been for the better; or, that if so, it would have found such general acceptance as to prove a sufficient bond of union; he thought he acted consistently, in endeavouring to obtain them on the terms stated.

Bishop Seabury, was free to declare his dissatisfaction with some of the articles; and during the former convention in Philadelphia, had expressed a doubt in conversation with the author and several others, whether it were expedient to have any: it being presumed by him, that all necessary doctrine should be comprehended in the liturgy. But on this occasion, he saw so clearly the inconveniences likely to result from there being no authoritative rule in the form of public confession, that he wished to adopt one; and as the author understood him, the code of the 39 articles.

Bishop Provoost did not deliver his sentiments on the subject; which was the less exacted of him, because of the circumstance of his being in the presidential chair. But the author has always supposed, that they do not materially differ from those of Bishop Madison, who gave his opinion against articles altogether. He had long before declared himself on this point, in a sermon preached before the convention of Virginia, some years previously to his election to the episcopacy. This sermon was printed; and opposes articles, on the principles of the confessional and the like books.

Bishop Claggett no further gave his opinion, than as it was implied in his vote on the question, in the conference between the two houses. What little had passed among the bishops, was before the consecration; the recency of which was probably the cause of his giving of his mere vote in the conference of the houses. His sense was decidedly in favour of articles; as appeared also in his usual conversation on the subject.

There was no formal discussion of the subject, in the house of bishops: but they negatived the question of reference to a future convention, when it became the subject of conference between the two houses. The negative happened by Bishop Seabury's, Bishop Claggett's and the author's votes, against Bishop Madison's in the affirmative: so that the president was not called on to vote. The author takes notice, that this transaction is not recorded on the journal of the house of clerical and lay deputies. But it happened as recorded on that of the bishops; who, by their negative vote, only showed their willingness to undertake the subject: for the postponement took place of course; as the other house, immediately after the conference, determined to dismiss it for the present.

It may be proper to mention a proposition made by the bishops, but not entered on the journals.

Bishop Madison had communicated to the author, on their journey from Philadelphia to New York, a design which he had much at heart—that of effecting a re-union with the methodists: and he was

so sanguine as to believe, that by an accommodation to them in a few instances, they would be induced to give up their peculiar discipline, and conform to the leading parts of the doctrine, the worship and the discipline of the episcopal church. It is to be noted, that he had no idea of comprehending them, on the condition of their continuing embodied, as at present. On this there was communicated to him an intercourse held with Dr. Coke, one of the superintendants* of that society; which might have showed to Bishop Madison, how hopeless all endeavours for such a junction must prove. Nevertheless, he persisted in his well meant design. The result of this, was his introducing into the house of bishops of a proposition; which his brethren after some modifications, approving of the motive, but expecting little as the result of it, consented to send to the other house. The proposition is as follows.

"The protestant episcopal church in the United States of America, ever bearing in mind the sacred obligation which attends all the followers of Christ, to avoid divisions among themselves; and anxious to promote that union for which our Lord and Saviour so earnestly prayed; do hereby declare to the christian world, that, uninfluenced by any other considerations than those of duty as christians, and an earnest desire for the prosperity of pure christianity, and the furtherance of our holy religion; they are ready and

* This was the name that was then borne by those who presided in the methodist communion.

willing to unite and form one body with any religious society, which shall be influenced by the same catholic spirit. And in order that this christian end may be the more easily effected, they further declare, that all things in which the great essentials of Christianity or the characteristic principles of their church are not concerned, they are willing to leave to future discussion; being ready to alter or modify those points, which, in the opinion of the protestant episcopal church, are subject to human alteration. And it is hereby recommended to the state conventions, to adopt such measures or propose such conferences with Christians of other denominations, as to themselves may be thought most prudent; and report accordingly to the ensuing general convention."

On the reading of this in the house of clerical and lay deputies, they were astonished, and considered it as altogether preposterous; tending to produce distrust of the stability of the system of the episcopal church, without the least prospect of embracing any other religious body. The members generally mentioned, as a matter of indulgence, that they would permit the withdrawing of the paper; no notice to be taken of it. A few gentlemen, however, who had got some slight intimations of the correspondence between Dr. Coke and the author, who would have been gratified by an accommodation with the methodists, and who thought that the paper sent was a step in measures to be taken to that effect, spoke in favour of the proposition. But it was

not to be endured; and the bishops silently withdrew it, agreeably to leave given.

To guard against misconstruction, at some future time, of the correspondence between Dr. Coke and the author, he records it here.

In the spring of the year 1791, the author received from that gentleman a letter, containing a plan of what he considered as an union of the methodistical society with the episcopal church. The plan was, in substance, that all the methodist ministers, at the time in connexion, were to receive episcopal ordination, as also those who should come forwards in future within the connexion; such ministers to remain under the government of the then superintendants and their successors. Dr. Coke's motive to the proposed union, as stated in his letter, was an apprehension entertained by him, that he had gone further in the separation than had been designed by Mr. Wesley, from whom he had received his commission. Mr. Wesley himself, he was sure, had gone further than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed. The doctor was certain, that the same gentleman was sorry for the separation, and would use his influence to the utmost, for the accomplishment of a re-union. Dr. Coke's letter was answered by the author, with the reserve which seemed incumbent on one, who was incompetent to decide with effect on the proposal made.

It happened that Dr. Coke, before he received the answer to his letter, hearing of the decease of Mr. Wesley, the news of which reached America

during the short interval between the dates of the two letters, set off immediately from Baltimore for Philadelphia, to take his passage for England. On reaching this city and calling on Dr. Magaw, he was much disappointed on hearing of the early answer, lest it should fall into the hands of his colleague—Mr. Asbury. He visited the author, in company of Dr. Magaw; and in speaking of the above incident, said, that although he hoped Mr. Asbury would not open the letter; yet he might do so, on the supposition that it related to their joint concern. The conversation was general; and nothing passed, that gave any ground of expectation of a re-union, on the principle of consolidation; or any other principle, than that of the continuing of the methodists a distinct body and self-governed. In short there were held out only the terms of the letter; in which there does not seem to be contemplated any change in the relation of the episcopal church to that society, except the giving of them access to the episcopal congregations, while there was sufficient security provided, to prevent the clergy of the latter from having access to congregations of the methodists. At least it is here supposed, that these things would have been unavoidably the result.

The author saw Dr. Coke twice after this; once, by appointment at Dr. Magaw's, where nothing material passed; and again, alone at the author's house, where Dr. Coke read a letter which he had written to bishop Seabury, similar to that which he had written to the author; but with the difference of his

suggesting to bishop Seabury as follows—That although the methodists would have confidence in any engagements which should be made by the present bishops; yet there might in future be some, who, on the arrival of their inferior grades of preachers to a competency to the ministry, would not admit them as proposed in the letter—That to guard against the danger of this, there would be use in consecrating Mr. Asbury to the episcopacy—And that although there would not be the same reasons in his (Dr. Coke's) case, because he was a resident of England; yet, as he should probably, while he lived, occasionally visit America; it would not be fit, considering he was Mr. Asbury's senior, that he should appear in a lower character than this gentleman. These were, in substance, the sentiments expressed; and on reading this part of the letter, he desired the author to take notice, that he did not make a condition of what he had there written. There was no comment, and he proceeded.

In this conversation he said, that Mr. Asbury had opened his letter, but he had heard nothing from him on the subject. With this interview, all intercourse ended. Dr. Coke soon afterwards embarked for England; and was reported to have had an interview with Mr. Asbury somewhere down the river, on his journey to the ship. The author avoided speaking on the subject, until the convention in 1792; and then mentioned it only to the bishops; towards whom there was understood to be a latitude. It was evident from some circumstances which passed in

conversation with Dr. Coke, that there was a degree of jealousy, if not of misunderstanding, between him and Mr Asbury. Whether this had any influence in the enterprise of the former; or he perceived advantage likely to arise to him, under the state of things which would take place in England on the decease of Mr. Wesley; are questions, on which there is no judgment here formed. The determination was adopted, not to hinder any good which might possibly accrue hereafter; although it was perceived, that this could not be on the terms proposed.

For a copy of the letter of Dr. Coke, and the answer to it, see the Appendix, No. 21.

Perhaps it may not be foreign to the present subject to take notice, that the author, when in England, entertained a desire of seeing the late Mr. John Wesley; with the view of stating to him some circumstances, of which he might be uninformed, in reference to the design then lately adopted, of withdrawing the methodist societies in America from the communion of the episcopal church. Under this idea, there was obtained a letter to him from the Rev. Mr. Pilmore, which the author left at the house of Mr. Wesley, when he was from home; but no notice was taken of it. Before the author's departure, intending to go on a certain day into the city, he sent to that gentleman a letter by the penny-post, expressing, that he would on the same day stop at his house, if convenient to him. An answer was received, and is still in possession, the purport of which is, that Mr. Wesley was then engaged in a

periodical duty of an examination of his society; but that in the case of a stay of a week or two, he would derive pleasure from the interview proposed. As the stay was only ten days after, and the latter part of the time was taken up by the business of the consecration and in returning visits, there was no renewal of the proposal of an interview, especially as doubts were entertained of the delicacy of doing so: the resting of an hour's conversation on the event of a stay of a fortnight longer, having very much the appearance of a declining of the visit. This may have arisen from the supposition, that the object was to impugn a measure hastily adopted by Mr. Wesley, and not intended to be relinquished.

The author had also carried a letter from the Rev. Mr. Pilmore to the Rev. Charles Wesley, and had a conversation with him on the same subject. He expressed himself decidedly against the new course adopted; and gave the author a pamphlet published by his brother and himself, in the earlier part of their lives, against a secession from the church of England: which, he said, was at that time proposed by some. And he remarked, that the whole of the pamphlet might be considered as a censure on what had been done recently in America.

L. Page 26. *Of the Convention in* 1795.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops; and the Rev. Dr. Smith of Pennsylvania in the house

of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries, were the Rev. Joseph Turner of the former house, and the Rev. James Abercrombie of the latter.

The preacher on this occasion was bishop Provoost.

Before the assembling of this convention, there took place an incident, threatning to produce permanent dissatisfaction between bishops Seabury and Provoost; which, however, was happily prevented. Although bishop Seabury had been chosen bishop of the church in Rhode Island; the congregation of Narraganset in that state, had associated with the church in Massachusetts; which had unwarily admitted the junction. In consequence, a clergyman had been ordained for the congregation by bishop Provoost. The author, during the sitting of the convention, received a letter from bishop Seabury, respectfully and affectionately complaining of the matter. Bishop Provoost, on the letter's being read to him, said, that on receiving the letter from the clergy of Massachusetts, he had doubted of the propriety of the proposal in it; but that on consulting the clergy of New York, and especially those in the most intimacy with bishop Seabury, he was advised by them to compliance; but that he perceived objections to such conduct in individual congregations, and would much approve of a canon to prevent it. Such a canon, was accordingly prepared and passed. It is believed, that no dissatisfaction remained.

The author was enabled to lay before this convention an application from a convention in North

Carolina, for the consecration of the Rev. Charles Pettigrew their bishop. This gentleman, as appears by a subsequent letter from him, set off to attend the convention, with a view to consecration; but was prevented by an interruption of his journey in consequence of an epidemic fever in Norfolk, which made him despair of arriving in time: there being some interruptions in the usual accommodations for travelling. Why nothing was done afterwards, for the carrying of the design into effect, is not known, unless it be the decease of the reverend person in question, which must have happened not long after.

The church in North Carolina having organized itself and sent deputies to the general convention about three years ago, it may be an act of justice to perpetuate their former effort; rendering it probable, that the ensuing inactivity is resolveable into the want of some clergymen of sufficient zeal and influence, to take the lead in such business.

There had been, previously, an exertion to the same good effect. The Rev. James L. Wilson, ordained by the author in 1789, embarked as a deputy to the general convention of 1792; but after an unusually long passage, arrived too late. At his special request, his arrival after the adjournment was noticed by the secretary, as it now stands, below the journal. Mr. Wilson returned to North Carolina, and soon after died.

With the recommendation of Mr. Pettigrew, there came a letter to the author, expressive of solicitude because of what he considered, and his electors ap-

pear in the instrument to have considered a departure in his certificate from the appointed form. The letter was answered; and the answer communicated the information, that the supposition of defect was owing to their not having been made acquainted with a canon passed at the immediately preceding convention, providing for such a case as that now existing, in which some of the electors, because of the want of personal acquaintance, had rested their recommendation on the testimony of their brethren in the act.

For the instrument referred to, see the Appendix, No. 22.

Some time before the convention, there was sent to the author, by a clergyman from South Carolina, a copy of a printed circular letter, signed by two clergymen and a layman, and addressed to the different vestries. The signers called themselves a select committee, from a representation of seven churches; and proposed the choosing of a bishop: but gave such reasons for the measure, as indicated a design of separating from the union. The author conceived it to be his duty, to lay this paper before the bishops: who, in consequence, after the testimonials of Dr. Robert Smith had been presented to them with a view to his consecration, desired an interview with him. In that interview, the author, as president, being so instructed by the bishops, asked him, whether the convention, which had been held in consequence of the said printed paper, had adopted the sentiments of it. Dr. Smith then asked—

Whether his consecration was to depend on his answer to that question. The president replied, that he was not instructed on the point. The doctor then immediately said, that the convention had not adopted the principles of the paper. So, all difficulty on that score was done away. There existed no evidence to the contrary, nor have there been any subsequently received to that effect. It has never been learned, who was the penman of that wretched production. Probably, the offensive sentiments contained in it were a temporizing expedient; designed to obviate prejudices which were known to exist in South Carolina, against the having of a bishop for that state. The tendency of the paper to a severance of the church in South Carolina from the union, was unequivocal.

Although the principles of the paper were not adopted by the convention of South Carolina, as appears from the testimony of bishop Smith; yet, as it was issued with a view to important consequences; and as the propriety of the conduct of the house of bishops is implicated in its contents; it is given without the signatures, in the Appendix, No. 23.

There appear on the journals some entries requiring explanation, concerning the Rev. Dr. Samuel Peters. This gentleman, had been a clergyman of Connecticut before the revolution. He had gone to England, during the war; and sometime before the period now referred to, had endeavoured to procure consecration in England, with the view of being bishop in Vermont: having obtained a request to that

effect, from a convention held in the said state. The archbishop of Canterbury, had declined to consecrate any further for the United States; the church here being already supplied with the succession. It is stated in the documents, that his reason was his not being authorized by the act of parliament, to consecrate any further: but this must have been a mistake of the framers of the documents. The convention of Vermont being thus disappointed, applied to the American bishops. There was but one clergyman in that state—The Rev. John Cosins Ogden—who had not been and who did not stay there long. Probably, his going there for a time, was with the view of effecting the object now treated of. The conduct of the bishops, in declining any agency in the business, is rested on the circumstance that the church in Vermont had not acceded to the constitution. There were besides some personal circumstances, which prevented the paying of much respect to the solicitation. It was this transaction, which produced an addition to one of the canons; requiring, that to entitle the church in any state to a resident bishop, there shall be at least six presbyters residing and officiating therein.

There are on the journals of this convention some entries, in which it was thought expedient to leave a transaction unexplained; and so it might have continued, had not the very exceptionable conduct of an individual member, after the recess, rendered it questionable, whether they had not erred in not having expelled him from the body: the only punish-

ment in their power, since there could have been no ecclesiastical trial, except before the authority of his proper diocess, where he would have been still liable to it. There also arose the question, whether the bishops had acted correctly, in rescuing him from expulsion.

It appears on the journal of the house of clerical and lay deputies, that on Friday the 11th of September, "the attention of the house was called by the Rev. Dr. Andrews to the consideration of a pamphlet lately published, entitled—Strictures on the love of Power in the Prelacy—by a Member of the Protestant Episcopal Association in South Carolina—which he declared to be a virulent attack upon the doctrines and discipline of our church, and a libel against the house of bishops; and which was alledged to be written by a member of this house." On Thursday the 17th, it is recorded on the journal of the house of bishops—"This house requested the house of clerical and lay deputies, to appoint a committee of their house, to meet a committee of the house of bishops. The committee of this house is bishop White and bishop Provoost. The house of clerical and lay deputies agreed to the request of this house, and the joint committee met in the bishops' chamber." Further, the journal of the house of clerical and lay deputies for the same day states as follows—"The committee" (meaning that of the whole house) "rose, and their chairman reported, that they had considered the paper referred to them yesterday, which was from the author of the pam-

phlet entitled—Strictures on the Love of Power in the Prelacy, in which he professes sorrow for the publication, and that they were of opinion that the house should accept it as a satisfactory concession. Resolved, that the house adopt the above report."

This termination of the business, although pressed by the bishops, was not acquiesced in without considerable opposition; and to the last, three very respectable lay gentlemen, who were of a remarkably conciliatory character, pressed for permission to enter their protest. It was not granted: and as this has been the only instance, in which the question of a right to protest has undergone discussion, the recording of a denial of the right, falls in with the design of the present work.

Whether the course of conduct adopted were right or otherwise, it happened as is here related. The author of the pamphlet, seeing expulsion full before him, thought fit to look to the house of bishops for a shelter. After considerable negociation, in which the author was the medium of communication between the house and him, he sent to the house an ample apology for his misconduct; which induced them to interfere, in order to put a stop to the proceedings: and hence their proposal of a joint committee. The offender gave subsequent evidence, that his professed penitence was insincere, although it had been accompanied by a profusion of tears, when he discussed the subject with the author, in the presence of the Rev. Dr. Smith of Pennsylvania. This was an issue which could not have been foreseen,

and which it would have been uncharitable to have thought probable. The house of bishops committed the apology to the keeping of the author, (where it now remains,) not to be made use of, unless in the case of future misconduct. When this happened, bishops Provoost and Madison, who alone were present when the deposit was made, were written to for their permission to send a copy of the apology, to the ecclesiastical authority of the diocess to which the offender belonged. Leave was given, and the document was sent.*

M. Page 27. *Of the Convention in* 1799.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and Dr. William Smith of Pennsylvania in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries were the Rev. John Henry Hobart of the former, and the Rev. James Abercrombie of the latter.

The consecration of Dr. Bass during the recess of the convention, and his appearing on this occasion

* The personal abuse in the licentious pamphlet, was principally levelled at bishop Seabury; and the ground of it, was his supposed authorship of a printed defence of the episcopal negative, written and acknowledged by another respectable divine of this church. On the author of the present work the pamphleteer bestowed a commendation, which impliedly exempted him from the general charge of "Love of Power in the Prelacy." Coming from such a pen, it could be no cause of self-gratulation: but it was encouragement to assist in the exposure which took place, and which is to be attributed principally to Dr. Andrews.

induces the record, that on the 7th of May, 1797, he was consecrated in Christ church in the city of Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Provoost and Claggett.

It is evident on an inspection of the journal, that the bishops had no opportunity of expressing their sense on the question of publishing the draft of articles which it contains. Such a publication was certainly very injudicious; if for no other reason, because it might have been expected to be easily mistaken for the sense of at least one of the houses of the convention. Indeed it was so misunderstood: whereas it was the sense of a committee only; not an individual besides having delivered in his place any opinion on any article. But this was not the worst. It tended to excite religious acrimony, without any possible good effect at the present; and with the probable bad effect of the greater acrimony, on an opportunity of settlement in future.

In order to show the importance of the exercise of great care and much deliberation, in any measure which may effect Christian verity; the author will here notice, that an important doctrine of the church of England was unwarily affected in the body of the articles, by the introduction of a single word. It was "priesthood," as applied in the 9th article, to denote all the orders of the Christian ministry; and not confined to the order of presbyters, as in the established ordinal, of the former of which there is no example in the institutions of the church of England.

It is well known, that the English reformers took care to show, that they did not mean to identify the names of the Christian ministry with those of the Jewish priesthood. Although they retained the name of "priest," which is Πρεσβυτερος (or "presbyter") with an English termination, and in the Roman catholic church had stood alike for that Greek word and for Ιερευς; yet this church having in Latin adopted the word "sacerdos," the last was carefully avoided by the reformers, and "presbyter" was put in its place. It would have been in harmony with this, if the article in question had applied "priesthood" to the single order of presbyters. But it is applied to the three orders collectively; which is another matter. To perceive the effect, it is only necessary to suppose the said 9th article translated into Latin: in which case, if the word "presbyteriatus" should be used, it would be wide of the intended sense. On the other hand, if "sacerdotium" should be taken, the innovation would stand confessed. This would have been agreeable to the theory of the individual clergyman who drafted the articles; but the rest of the committee are here believed to have been unaware of it. The above fact is recorded in order to show, that if ever the doctrinal system should be reviewed, it should be done under some other circumstances, than during the hurry of conventional business. In short, the review should be made by select persons, taking due time for so important a measure. After this, the only thing left for the convention, should be the adoption

or the rejection of what had been so prepared. This would be as near as circumstances permit, to what was done in England at the reformation.

It is not here designed to charge any other fault on the articles proposed. They are, in substance, what is contained in the thirty-nine Articles, without any superaddition, except in the particular stated. But the remarks may serve to show, that in the work of clearing that code of what may be thought unnecessary positions, there is the danger of admitting some novelty, more fruitful of controversy than what may be done away. In the present instance, the novelty introduced is susceptible of the construction, of obtruding on the church the notions of "sacrifice," in the strict and proper sense; of "altar," as the place of it; and of "priest," as the sacrificer.

In this convention, considerable animosity was excited in the house of clerical and lay deputies, on the subject of the election of a reverend gentleman to the episcopacy in New Jersey. Agreeably to the distinction taken by the author, of recording personal matters then only when necessary to illustrate ecclesiastical effects, and when something appears on the journal which may be thus elucidated; it may be proper to note in this place, that whatever ground was taken by the said house in the strict construction of the canon, fixing the number of clerical incumbents in a state in which a bishop might be chosen; there was a more important reason at the bottom of the objection made. The truth is, that the gentleman elected was considered by his brethren generally, as

being more attached to the doctrines and the practices obtaining in some other churches, than to those of his own. What rendered the management of the case the more difficult, was his being brought forwards by some gentlemen, who had always professed the strongest disapprobation of the least deviation from the institutions of the church. No doubt, they thought they perceived some advantages, counterbalancing the unquestionable fact, that the bishop elect had been not a little reprehensible in that line. The bishops kept themselves from taking any interest in the subject; no one of them expressing his opinion, so far as is here known. It is to be hoped, that their conduct will be the same on any similar occasions which may occur. Delicacy requires this; as, in the case of the requisite testimonials, the approbation of the consecrating bishops will still be necessary.

Bishop Bass having been consecrated between the dates of the last convention and the present; it may be proper in this place to guard against any false impressions which might be made, at the time of the former application; and a paper purporting to be the dissent of two clergymen. This may otherwise be thought to have influenced the determination in the first instance, and to have prevented the consecration of Dr. Bass. But it would be a mistake. The objections referred to, were generally supposed to receive no weight from the characters of the two objecting clergymen. They were represented as being not at all attached to the ecclesiastical system of the episcopal church. Of this, or

of the contrary, the bishops possessed no such evidence, as was sufficient to be a ground of their conduct at the time. There was no use in looking out for evidence, as there was other ground on which the consecration was declined—the want of the requisite number of bishops to be consecrated in England. When bishop Bass was subsequently admitted to the episcopacy, the bishops who consecrated him had made up their minds on the merits of the preceding objection to him.

There was also a paper, purporting to be the dissent of his own vestry; which was denied and found to be not true.

N. Page 28. *Of the Convention in* 1801.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and the Rev. Dr. Abraham Beach in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries, were the Rev. Henry Waddell of the former house, and the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin of the latter. The occasion was opened with a sermon by the presiding bishop.

No sooner were the convention organized, than there came from the house of clerical and lay deputies a call for a letter which they understood to have been sent to the author by bishop Provoost, on the subject of his resigning of the episcopal jurisdiction. This measure raised a very serious question, made the more important by its being unexpected. The whole of the merits of it, so far as it was discussed at the time, is in the entry of the house of bishops on

their journal: which is therefore given in the Appendix, No. 24.

As the articles were at last established by this convention, the author thinks it may be of use, to give a narrative of some particulars in the management of that matter; in addition to what has been stated relative to the proceeding in 1792.

When the book was edited with the proposed alterations of 1785; no sooner were they known in the different states, than the sentiment became general, that they were not to be received without alterations; while yet there was nothing like unanimity, in regard to what the alterations should be. The same may be said in regard to the thirty-nine Articles. Some changes, independently on what was of a local and political nature, seemed desired by all: but of any considerable agreement in particulars, there was little prospect.

Accordingly, the church was left in a situation very embarrassing, in regard to the standard of her doctrinal profession. On the one hand, the articles, with the exception of the political parts, the obligation of which had been abrogated by divine providence through the instrumentality of the revolution, were still the acknowledged faith of the church: while, on the other hand, they could not be edited as such, without changes at least in the manner of exhibiting them; which no individual had a right to regulate. What rendered the situation of the church the worst in this respect, was, that it suited the opinions of some, to declare in consequence of it,

that she had no articles; and could have none, until they should be framed by a convention, and established by its authority. In support of this sentiment, they pleaded what has been stated as the very exceptionable manner of doing business, adopted by the house of clerical and lay deputies in the year 1789. That house, in regard to every part of the prayer book on which they acted, brought the office forward as a matter originating with them; and not their alterations, as affecting an office already known and of obligation. It was answered, that this was an assumption of but one of the houses of a single convention; that the other house had even then adopted a contrary course; that the same had been done in all the preceding conventions, and that in the only subsequent convention in which there had been any alteration of a former standard—meaning of the ordinal, altered in 1792—it had been so acted on, as to acknowledge the obligation of the old forms, with the exception of the political parts, until altered. This seems conclusive reasoning: and yet the opposite doctrine was held by many; which threatened unhappy consequences.

During the convention of 1789, although nothing was done relatively to the articles, there was much serious conversation on the subject: when the author was surprized to find, that bishop Seabury, the only bishop at the convention besides himself, doubted of the need of articles; and was rather inclined to believe, that the object of them might be accomplished, through the medium of the liturgy. This was so wide

of what might have been expected from his usual turn of sentiment, that to the author, there seemed at the time no way of accounting for it, otherwise than by the supposition, that the bishop conceived the articles to be nearer to the height of Calvinism, than they are found to be on due consideration of their history, and of cotemporary controversies. But it has since appeared, that there had never been the thirty-nine Articles or any such standard in the non-juring church of Scotland, in which bishop Seabury was consecrated, and to the ways of which he was very much attached. But the said church, very soon after the time here referred to, and when her clergy took the oaths to the government, manifested their consent with the church of England, by adopting her thirty-nine Articles. Indeed, there was never supposed to have existed a disagreement in regard to doctrine: but it was the result of the independency of each church on the other.*

* In Mr. Belsham's Life of Mr. Theophilus Lindsey, bishop Seabury is represented as a Calvinist. Nothing can be further from the truth. In the same work, there is an anecdote tending to lower his character, on account of an incident which took place at a commencement in New Haven, in which the bishop had no more to say, than Mr. Belsham himself: as the author has been informed on the best authority. It was equally unworthy of the biographer to speak with contempt of the Scotish consecrators of the bishop, not only, because their characters repel the charge of ignorance thrown on them; but, because their having been so long under the lash of the law, for adherence to the dictates of their consciences, ought to have produced a fellow feeling in a man similarly situated.

In the convention of 1792, the subject had been discussed among the bishops in friendly conversation; when the opinions of bishops Provoost and Madison were directly against the having of articles; while bishop Claggett and the author were in favour of them. The remarks of bishop Seabury were general; rather in the way of doubt as to the necessity of articles; although, on the other side, he acknowledged his inability to answer an argument pressed on him—that without them, individual ministers would have to do by their respective will and authority, what had better be done by known law, for the preventing of the delivery of opposite doctrines to their flocks, by different preachers.

However moderate or uncertain bishop Seabury was on the subject, the clergy and the laity of his diocess thought differently; as appeared in the convention of 1799, held not long after his decease. At the pressing instance of the deputies from that state, and in consequence of instructions to them, the business was then entered on; although probably with the presumption on the minds of the proposers, that it would be finished during the session. It however happened otherwise; the matter then ending with a proposed body of articles wholly new in form, edited with the journal. The opinion has been already intimated that this was a very injudicious measure: but there may now be added, that it proved beneficial in its unexpected consequences. It appeared an injudicious measure, on the same ground on which the proposal of 1785 was found to be such: that is,

as unsettling a present fixture, without any reasonable prospect of establishing a substitute. If it were beneficial in its consequences; this happened by its showing of the improbability of agreement in a new form, and its thus contributing to the recognizing of the old articles. Even the mistakes of readers contributed to this effect. For it is astonishing how many, even of the clergy, considered what was edited as proposed for the acceptance of a future convention: whereas it was only recorded by one of the houses to be matter of future discussion. As for the bishops, they never saw the contemplated articles, before they were printed with the journal: and they who read attentively must perceive, that it was merely a report of a committee of the other house, without any evidence of their approving of a single sentence of it. These remarks, should be considered as having no reference to any question concerning the correctness of the report. Let it have been correct or not; and although the author thinks it substantially correct, yet he is confident, that the issue must have been the same.

That issue is the adoption of the articles, as edited by the convention of the present year. Even during the session of the body, and when the sentiment had obtained generally, that no new set of articles should be attempted; the author was often assailed by members who had adopted the principle; urging, each of them, that there might be an exemption in regard to some one point, the most desired by him to be corrected. To all applications

of this sort his answer was, that he was content to accept the articles as they were (the political parts being understood to be already altered, without any conventional act) as the ground of union; that if they should be thrown open to discussion, there were various particulars, in which he thought they might be improved; that all those particulars he should think himself bound in conscience to bring forwards; that no doubt many other members would do the like; and that then—What probability was there, of there being edited any articles?

The author having had so much occasion, in the relation of the proceedings of this business, to refer to his own conduct; he thinks that there will be propriety in his presenting of the grounds of it.

On the general question—Whether it be expedient to have a body of articles, it has always appeared, as already hinted, that to establish them, is merely to accomplish by a general regulation, what will otherwise be done by individual ministers at will; and this, sometimes, in intemperate and scandalous opposition to one another. For instance, in relation to the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and the atonement made by him for sin; it cannot be conceived, that an advocate for these doctrines will knowingly permit them to be contradicted in his pulpit; or, that a denier of them will permit them to be advocated or acted on in his. Accordingly, there will be articles, written or unwritten; and the inquiry should be confined to the point of the most judicious depositary of the power.

When the author was in England; being one day in company with a unitarian minister—a gentleman of considerable note in the literary world—liberty was taken to inquire, in what way the societies of his faith held their places of worship; and whether, as in America, the property were vested in persons chosen by the congregations. He answered with a smile—Oh no; for then, in consequence of the ease with which respectable applicants are permitted to take pews among us, it might happen, that in the choice of a minister, an interest would be created in favour of a pastor, not entertaining the belief, for the maintainance of which a house had been erected. He said, that to guard against this, the meeting houses were vested in persons who may be depended on; and who perpetuate the trust to others, of the same faith. What is this, but an indirect way of accomplishing the object, for which articles are designed? There was not omitted a remark to the effect in the conversation alluded to: a freedom, which grew out of a previous conversation on the subject.

The house of worship especially referred to, was that known by the name of "Essex-street Chapel." Within these few years there has been published the life of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, its first minister, by the Rev. Thomas Belsham, who is now its pastor. From the work it appears, that the trustees of the building have ordered the Book of Common Prayer, as corrected by Mr. Lindsey, to be deposited in the chest with the title deeds; to be the rule of worship

in future, and no alterations to be permitted, without the consent of the major number of the trustees.

It ought not to be thought an indecorum, towards a mode of profession with which the author has no concern, to notice the above particular as an historic fact; and to apply it to the illustration of the impracticability of the principle, on which the theory in question is grounded.

In the book referred to, there is an office for infant baptism: why should this be required by a permanent regulation, when some professing Christians confine the institution to adults, and others allow of no baptism, but that of the Spirit? The remark applies to the celebrating of the eucharist under the elements of bread and wine, in opposition to those who contend for spiritual feeding only. In relation to both the sacraments, some, who acknowledge the external celebration of them by the apostles, affirm, that the ordinances were limited to the apostolic age. The observance of the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, is exacted throughout the book: but why, when there are persons who conscientiously stickle for the seventh day of the week? Other questions might be proposed: and who knows what new opinions may arise, which may be thought worthy of sufferance, and accordingly draw the book out of the chest? The compiler of it was so sensible of this, that in his last review, he omitted the apostles' creed: and one of his reasons was—"no man or number of men together, have any authority to make a creed for others." This brings the matter to a question of

words; since, in the above, it is impossible to act without a declaration of belief, although not under the name of a creed.

In a note, the reasonableness of the proceeding is defended on the principle, that the trustees, who have the custody of the book and thereby jurisdiction over the worship of the chapel, are the proprietors of it. Let but the plea be extended to any church or chapel in any part of England or of America; with the proviso that none are compelled to join in the worship performed in it; and there ceases all ground of complaint on the subject of confessions and creeds.

These things are not said without the conviction, that, in the premises, ecclesiastical authority is liable to be extended much too far. All contended for is, that this species of discipline, must be exercised in one shape or in another. It is called discipline: for as to the truth of synodical determinations, further than as they agree with Scripture, no sound protestant will affirm it.

Accordingly, we are necessarily led to the question, whether the proper mean be the formula of the thirty-nine articles. God forbid that they should be admitted, otherwise than on the ground of their being in substance a body of divine truth: which they may be, consistently with incorrect statements in some points, not necessarily involved in that object. For the illustrating of this distinction, there shall be here cited an instance, which, it is supposed, will admit of no dispute. In the sixth article, the books of holy Scripture are affirmed to be the rule of faith:

and the required subscription is evidently inconsistent with the rejection of any of the books specified. But when there are introduced the incidental expressions—"of which there never was any doubt in the church;" it is apparently contradictory to what ecclesiastical history informs us, in regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the Epistle of St. James, the second and third Epistles of St. John, and the Apocalypse: concerning all of which there were doubts, although cleared up on full inquiry. It is within the meaning of the form of subscription in this church, that the prominent fact of the authenticity of those books may be acknowledged, while the subordinate fact, couched under the recited expressions, is rejected. It is not equally manifest that the same latitude of interpretation is allowable on the ground of the form of subscription in the church of England.

But it will be said, that supposing the articles to contain the whole substance of revealed truth, it is the fault of them, that they contain much more; embracing the tenets of the Calvinistic system. In contrariety to this assertion, the persuasion is entertained, that they will be found, on a diligent attention to the subject, to have been framed with a studied latitude on the questions, which were afterwards denominated the five points, in the controversy between the Calvinists and the Arminians: this, with the exception of the doctrine of final perseverance, to which the whole system of the church of England stands opposed; the doctrine not being held at that

time by the description of people afterwards called Calvinists; who as yet continued in the opinion of St. Austin, in that particular. It may be proved, that in the reign of Edward VI. when the articles were framed, there was a diversity of sentiments on those points; and yet, that neither side complained of their being excluded. Far from it, when, in the reign of Elizabeth, Calvinism came in with greater authority from Geneva, the constant complaint of the puritans was, that the articles were not sufficiently evangelical, in that matter. Hence, the framing of what were called the Lambeth articles; and the pressing of them at that time, and afterwards in the reign of king James; although without effect. It is but to compare the thirty-nine Articles with the Westminster confession, or with the decrees of the synod of Dort, to perceive how general and guarded the first were, on the topics on which the others are very particular and express. Let these remarks suffice on a subject, on which it ought not to be expected to be in this place more minute.

For the form of subscription in this church, and for that required in the church of England, see the Appendix, No. 25.

But supposing all said above to be correct; it will still be asked—Are these articles so perfect, that there can be no possible improvement on them? If this be not so, are they to remain for ever, with known and acknowledged imperfection? And if this be not contended for, what are the circumstances which will render the altering of them an expedient

measure? To these questions it is answered, not without the answerer's distrust of his own judgment; first, that in a few instances, the doctrines of the Gospel may be expressed more satisfactorily to his mind; that therefore, in the next place, he does not arrogate to them perpetuity; but that further, before any altering of them be attempted, these two circumstances should concur—first, a better establishment in the estimation of the church generally, of the ecclesiastical authority in her, as yet a modern institution: and how much this must depend on the general opinion entertained of the piety, the learning, and the lives of those who take an active part in her concerns, it would be difficult to calculate; as also what prospect there may be of the increase of the measure of the good which we may have among us, in these respects. The other circumstance, as declared under a former head, is a general conviction of the necessity of committing a matter of this sort to be prepared by a few, with the advantages of due time and deliberation; what is so prepared to be laid before the body; to be by them adopted or rejected, without discussion.

These sentiments are given, under a sense of responsibility to the great Head of the church; and under the conviction, that until the two stated circumstances shall combine, a new code of articles will have the effect of splitting the church into no one knows how many different communions; very much to the hindrance of true piety; and of those characteristics of our communion, in which we sup-

pose it to approach nearer than others, to the standard of the best ages.

In this convention, the question of recommending to the episcopacy the clergyman elected to it, as related under the head of the last preceding convention, came to a crisis. The church in New Jersey persevered in the election of him; and there was now no longer reason to hesitate, for want of a sufficient number of incumbents: because the question of fact had been referred by the last general convention, to the convention of the particular state which had decided in the affirmative. These things were reported to the house of clerical and lay deputies; and the result, was a direct refusal to recommend. The incident, although given in the journal, should not be noticed in these remarks; were it not to record, that the extreme dissatisfaction conceived by a few gentlemen, was prevented from ending in the inconve niences of which there was entertained an apprehension, by some controversies of a parochial description. Until these took place, the few gentlemen referred to had adopted so zealously the cause of the rejected clergyman, that they contemplated an application to the episcopal church in Scotland. This would certainly have failed: but the project was communicated by one of the gentlemen to the author. The bishop elect a few years afterwards joined the presbyterian church, probably in consequence of the parochial controversies referred to; which had also arrested the proceedings in his favour in regard to the episcopacy.

O. Page 30. *Of the Convention in* 1804.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and Dr. Beach in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries of the two houses, were the Rev. Cave Jones of the former house, and the Rev. John H. Hobart of the latter.

The opening sermon was by bishop Moore.

There needs some explanation of what appears on the journal, concerning the Rev. Ammi Rogers.

He was a native of Connecticut, and educated at Yale college. During the episcopacy of bishop Seabury, interest was making among the clergy, to procure the ordination of Rogers. But the bishop perceiving it, and in consequence of an unfavourable opinion entertained, declared that he never would ordain him. He afterwards went into the back parts of the state of New York; and there, by efforts of zeal and apparent prospect of usefulness, laid the foundation of an application for holy orders, to bishop Provoost. While the case was under consideration, the Rev. Dr. Beach, having heard that Rogers had been rejected in Connecticut, made objections. On this, he repaired to that state with the view of procuring from the Rev. Philo Perry, the secretary of the convention of the diocess, a certificate that there did not appear on the minutes any entry of the rejection of the person in question. Such a certificate might have been given with great truth, because no

formal application had been made. But Philo Perry being from home, Ammi Rogers fabricated a certificate in his name; not only testifying to the said fact, but going to the point of the correct life and conversation of the bearer. The last circumstance, is of importance; because, although a certificate as to his not having applied for and been refused orders, was obtained from Philo Perry afterwards, yet it went no further.

With the certificate forged as above, Ammi Rogers waited on Dr. Beach; and after thus satisfying him, requested permission to have the certificate in his possession for a while; in order to communicate it to some friends in New York, who had heard the story against him. This was assented to. The certificate was never returned: but in the mean time, Dr. Beach, relying on the integrity of it, withdrew his opposition, and Ammi Rogers was ordained.

In a few years after his ordination, he returned to his native state, and made himself popular at Stamford. The bishop and the clergy, refused to know him as belonging to the diocess: and it was this which brought before the house of bishops, by mutual consent, the question to which diocess he belonged.

In the investigation of this question, not only was the preceding fact proved by unquestionable testimony, especially the affidavit of Dr. Beach; but the clerical deputies from Connecticut, while they treated the man with the utmost decorum, produced ample evidence of a factious and mischievous disposition in

him. Still, the utmost length to which the bishops at first thought themselves warranted to go, was, in giving their opinion on the case submitted to them, to notice incidentally the iniquity which had come within their knowledge, in the investigation of the subject. Here they should have stopped. But unfortunately, one of the bishops having proposed that there should be included a recommendation to degrade the man from the ministry; the others, under the sensibility excited by the evidence of his great unworthiness and his flagitious conduct, consented to the proposal. This was ill judged, for these two reasons: first, it would give room, in the event of a condemnation, to object, that the opinion of the bishops, extra-judicially expressed, had obtained undue influence over the minds of those who were more properly the ecclesiastical judges of the offender. Perhaps, the same objection may seem to lie against the noticing of the forgery. But this was too glaring a fact to be denied, and indeed was admitted; while, on a succeeding trial, there would have still been a latitude as to the degree of punishment to be inflicted. The pointing to what this should be occasioned the other reason referred to, by contributing to what is here thought to be the error into which the bishop and the clergy of Connecticut subsequently fell, of supposing that Ammi Rogers had been tried by the house of bishops. This they never contemplated, and indeed would have been contrary to the ecclesiastical constitution.

The recording of this transaction, may be a caution against giving way in convention in future, to solicitations which will probably be occasionally made, for the obtaining of determinations on points personally and locally interesting; but which may be left, without the endangering of any principle, to the judicial authority of the church in each state. That this is the most agreeable to the ecclesiastical constitution, will not be denied. If the said instrument be not wisely contrived in this particular; still it should govern, until altered by competent authority. The constitution, however, is here conceived to be not liable to objection, on this account: and it is supposed, that a contrary provision would be found impracticable; because of the long intervals between the meetings of the general conventions, the difficulty of keeping them together, and other circumstances which might be mentioned.

After the rising of the convention, this business of Ammi Rogers threatened serious consequences to the church in Connecticut, owing to what has been already hinted—its having been there conceived, that he had been tried; and that nothing remained, except to declare him degraded.

When the author found, that what the bishops had recorded on their minutes was so materially misunderstood, he wrote to bishop Moore, to know his sense of the matter; and found, from a letter of that bishop still in possession, that there was a perfect coincidence of opinion between them. The only bishop besides, who had been present—bishop Par-

ker—had died in a very short time after his return to Boston. Bishop Jarvis had absented himself, from a motive of delicacy; and bishop Claggett had left the city on his journey home, before any judgment had been delivered.*

In the form in which the business stands on the journal, there does not sufficiently appear the ground, on which the bishops consented to give their sentiments on the question, as to the jurisdiction to which Ammi Rogers belonged. That ground was in the urgent solicitations of both the parties; which were thought to justify the expression of opinion.

The author supposes it due to the nature of this work, to annex to it the judgment of the bishops in the case of the said Ammi Rogers. Accordingly, it is in the Appendix, No. 26.

Notice is taken on the journal of the convention, of an application from the episcopal church in New Jersey, relative to an unhappy dispute there subsisting between a minister and his congregation. As the issue of this was a canon, the object of which was novel in the episcopal church, and the consequences of which may be important; it may be pro-

* The author and bishop Moore afterwards received a letter from the committee of the clergy in Connecticut, requesting advice on the question of again taking up the business of Rogers, and granting a trial. Both of those applied to advised the measure, but it did not take place. It would have been more discreet in them to have withheld their advice, until they should have known that it would have effect.

per to record the origin of it, and the general view entertained of its tendency by the author.

The clergyman in contemplation, was possessed of apparent zeal, and unexceptionable in his moral conduct. It is difficult to ascertain, how far these circumstances should extend lenity to what cannot in itself be defended. But certain it is, that he had manifested a leaning to practices very different from those of his church. In addition to this, there were complaints of his overbearing of the vestry, and of his taking of all authority to himself, in the management of the temporal concerns of the congregation. That from dissatisfaction with him they had become very much lessened, was affirmed and believed. The former of the objections he confirmed, by joining another religious communion, as soon as his severance from his particular congregation took place.

In regard to the merits of the canon, there may be doubts concerning the principle, on the ground that there should be no severance from a pastoral charge, except as the result of a trial for alledged misconduct: which is the most agreeable to the idea of exalting law above will. Besides, there is evident danger, that when a clergyman should be degraded, his congregation will avail themselves of this canon, from a false tenderness; and thus, while they rid themselves of the man, send him to disgrace the church elsewhere. Nevertheless, under the present circumstances of the church, and until some check can be given to the ease with which ministers are

admitted into congregations, the bishops consented to the canon. It deserves the name of a necessary, but—it is hoped—only temporary evil. The apprehension of the abuse of it, has been verified.

There appears on the journal to have been some difference of opinion between the houses, in reference to two canons, and occasioning a conference proposed by the house of bishops. As the difference did not involve any important principle, and as it was done away by mutual concession in the conference, no notice is taken of it in these statements.

It was in this convention, that the house of bishops prescribed the course of ecclesiastical study, still subsisting, for students in theology. This was doing something, towards the improving of the literary reputation of our ministry, and an advance towards the desirable object of a seminary or seminaries, in which the preparation of candidates may be the better secured by daily examinations held by qualified preceptors.

At this convention there was established, as proposed by the last, a change of the season of holding the conventions. There will be propriety in recording the reason. It was on account of our country's having been for some years visited by epidemic disease, in the autumn.

Agreeably to a proposal from the house of bishops, it having been there moved by bishop Jarvis, the business of the convention was concluded by prayer, performed by the presiding bishop; in the presence of both houses. It had been the rule during every con-

vention, to have morning prayer in the house of clerical and lay deputies, at which the bishops, by votes of their body, had attended.

The city of Baltimore was fixed on as the place of the next convention, to be held on the third Tuesday in May, 1808.

P. Page 31. *Of the Convention of* 1808.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and Dr. Beach in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries of the two houses, were the Rev. Dr. James Whitehead of the former, and the Rev. John H. Hobart of the latter.

Bishop Parker, who, at the request of the last convention, was to have opened the present with a sermon, being deceased, that office was discharged by the presiding bishop.

The thin attendance on this convention, must attract the notice of every one, who shall inspect the journal. In the house of clerical and lay deputies, the church was represented from seven states only: none coming from Virginia; on the account of the church in which state, a city so far south as Baltimore was principally chosen. In the house of bishops, there were two only—bishop Claggett and the author. When the latter repaired to the place of meeting; it was under an apprehension, having learned by letter from the other his being exceed-

ingly indisposed, that the question would be raised —Whether a single bishop can constitute a house. On this, he was prepared to sustain the affirmative, as being the most agreeable to the letter of the constitution; and because, on the contrary supposition, there could have been nothing done. The case, however, would have been very disagreeable. It was prevented by the attendance of bishop Claggett, although with a considerable degree of indisposition; under which he laboured during the whole session. Bishop Jarvis was said to be indisposed with the asthma, and bishop Moore was confined by an inflammation in his eyes. Why bishop Madison was absent, was not known; unless he were prevented by a loss sustained of a son, not long before.

In revising and arranging the canons, there occurred nothing material, besides the two following particulars.

One of them respected candidates for holy orders. The proposed canon prescribed different examinations to be held, during the time in which a case should be under consideration: and among the matters to be inquired into, was the party's being possessed of "a practical knowledge of religion." When this came before the bishops, they could form no idea of practical knowledge. They knew, that in the other house it had been consented to by the majority, in order to get rid of an expression pressed by some—that of "an experimental knowledge:" an expression much abused by its application to feelings merely animal, and unwelcome on that account. We

could, however, form an idea of the sense of it perfectly unexceptionable; supposing it to be such knowledge as is the result of experience. But the bishops did not perceive, how the candidate could satisfy his examiners as to this point, on any other evidence than that of his own declarations; the requiring of which was thought liable to much abuse. Accordingly, they proposed to leave out the clause concerning "practical knowledge;" and that after the other requisitions, there should be inserted an admonition to the candidate, of there being required in him those inward graces, which cannot be brought to any outward standard; and are named in Scripture "the fruits of the Spirit"—by which alone his sacred influence can be "known."

In addition to this, the bishops sent to the other house a paper, of which the following is a copy, to be read to them but not entered on their journal; in the printing of which, it accordingly does not appear, and is therefore inserted in this place.

"Having proposed the omission of an expression which seems designed to require inward piety, we wish to be clearly understood in this matter.

"Far be it from us to suppose, that any qualifications are sufficient, without pious affections, the effects of the grace of God on the heart. But although the living piously, that is in a visible profession and in the duties attached to it, may be certified; yet, the actual possession of piety must be the subject of the experience of the party, and not of the testimony of his fellow-men. If it should be thought,

that they may ascertain his experience by an inquiry into the movements of his mind; we remark, that the issue must be precarious, independently on some manifest abuses incident to it.

"The church of England, has always contented herself with a visible profession, a suitable life, and the solemn declarations at the altar. That in these, there may be imposition and insincerity, is unquestionable. But how they would have been prevented by further requisition, we do not discern. We recollect within that church many wise and holy men, who have been satisfied with her discipline in this particular. But we doubt of there having been any dissentients, whose opinions we would wish to see influential in this church. We call to mind a certain period in the history of England; when one effect of the entire prostration of her church, was the triumph of the principle here objected to. But we have learned too much of the consequent hypocrisy and tyranny, to be reconciled to any thing which bids fair to lead to the same result.

"In America, a question raised on the same ground, divided for some time a numerous and respectable body of Christians. But in consequence of more mature reflection among them, the controversy has been dying away; and, we believe, that there is now very little of it.

"But what in our opinion should over-rule all doubt, is not only the scheme of Scripture generally, as to the requisition in question; but that St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, where he lays down the

qualifications of the Christian ministry, says not a word of any kind of scrutiny, which can be satisfied only by the testimony of the party, concerning himself.

"The subject being important, we have thought it expedient to make this formal profession of our opinion."

When the alteration of the proposed canon by the bishops came into the house of clerical and lay deputies, it occasioned a warm debate, which turned altogether on the word "known:" the word "manifested" being proposed as a substitute, by those who objected to the other. The reason was, there being some in the convention who could not brook its being declared in a canon, that a man could no otherwise know the presence of the Spirit of God, than by his fruits. They evidently thought, there was a more immediate communication in the matter at issue; although they rested their objection chiefly on the supposition, of its cutting off all hope from a dying penitent; as if such a person might not be sensible of new affections, which the Spirit only can produce: whatever difference there may be between him and a holy liver, as to the certainty of those around him concerning the existence of such affections. Some, without deciding on which side the truth lay, remonstrated against the establishing by a side-blow, of what they called a controverted point. In the issue, the amendment of the bishops was accepted, but much to the dissatisfaction of the dissentients; who even talked of entering a protest. After the business

of the day, two respectable clergymen, who had argued and voted in the majority, privately recommended to the consideration of the two bishops—whether it would not be best for them to propose the change of "known" for "manifested;" this word not being opposed to their belief, although not so precisely suited to the sentiment intended to be conveyed. Their motive, was the expectation until now entertained, that the convention would close the next day, with a conciliatory spirit on all sides: which expectation would be disappointed, if the recommended measure should be rejected. The bishops, influenced by the same motive, complied with the proposal. But when the alteration came into the other house, there again arose a warm debate; a considerable proportion arguing against the acceptance of the revision. However, the more moderate counsel prevailed; but whether to any good purpose, can be known only by future events. The transaction is recorded under the mortifying reflection, that there has been an interference in the counsels of this church, of the wild and pernicious opinion manifested in this argument.

After the session was ended, in company with a member who had distinguished himself in the minority, the author remarked to him, that in the institutions of the episcopal church, there was nothing like the opinion which he seemed to entertain. He defended himself by the seventeenth article, where it speaks of election in Christ, as "full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons,

and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things:" words evidently harmonizing with the position, that "by the fruits of the Spirit only his holy influence can be *known*." Should such reasoners obtain the sway in the counsels of this church, her system will be overturned.

The other matter relative to the canons, was what occurred concerning the office of induction, established at the last convention. It is to be hoped, that the consequences of the measure will be an illustration of the maxim, that "the art of governing consists, in a great measure, in not governing too much." No objection had been made to the office: but the requiring of induction as essential to a valid settlement, was evidently perceived to militate against the ideas so prevalent in many places, of dismissing ministers at pleasure. Now although there can hardly be any principle, more evidently hostile to the permanent respectability of the ministry; yet it would have been better to have left the correction of it to time and attendant inconveniences, than to have brought the full force of it into operation by the measure now in question. Certainly it would have been best, to have rested the service on a recommendatory rubric. In Maryland, the measure interfered directly with the vestry-law. From Carolina, there was a memorial, desiring an alteration of the canon. And in other places, complaints were known to have been made. On the other hand, the service

and the result of it were with great reason so acceptable to some, that they refused to concur in doing away the former measure; but consented to the dispensing with it in those states or diocesses, in which it interfered with charters or usages. In this shape, the matter was brought before the bishops; who were reluctant to the saying of any thing, liable to be construed into an approbation of charters or usages, which they hold to be contrary to good order in the church. Still, the consequences of rejecting the canon were so stated to them, as to induce on their part the consenting to it; with a subjoined declaration, that it should not be construed as giving a sanction to the charters and the usages in contemplation; concerning which they also expressed the hope, that they will in time be altered. This amendment was accepted, and the canon passed.

A new arrangement of the canons made by this convention, had been pressed on every preceding occasion, and objected to by the author; who at last withdrew his opposition, submitting to the alleged advantage, of having all the provisions pertaining to the same subject classed together. It is to be hoped, that the course of conduct will end here, at least for a considerable time; or else, in the different diocesses, it will be to no purpose to refer to any particular canon, because of the uncertainty, whether it will retain its station after the next triennial convention. It will be much more convenient, to exhibit the canons of each conventional body as their act; and in every edition of the canons, to retain the titles of

such as are repealed, printing the titles in italics. A repeal will be the result of the considerable improvement of a former canon. But it was obligatory in its old form, while it remained in force; and may still require to be referred to, on some question connected with discipline. The title will direct to the journal; which will show how the canon stood, at the time to which it is desirable to apply it.

The journal shows, that there was accomplished at this convention, what has been from the beginning ardently desired by many, both of the clergy and of the laity—the giving of a full negative to the house of bishops. It is to be hoped, that the recollection of the course of this business, as found on the various journals, will show the propriety of leaving to time and mature reflection, to effect what may be for a while opposed by prejudices, not to be disregarded without extreme danger. What is here said, however, is designed of those prejudices only, which may be yielded to without the sacrifice of essential principle. This was the case in the present instance; and must have been perceived to be such, even by those who conceive the highest of episcopal claims. In the year 1785, even the necessity of the presidency of a bishop, when such a character should be obtained by consecration and should be present in the convention, was rejected. Still, nothing was decreed to the contrary; and in the next year, the absurd prejudice against the proposal was overruled. When another constitution was formed in 1789, if a provision for the episcopal negative had

been insisted on, it would have been destructive of the whole system. Nevertheless, in the many years intervening, no measure has passed, under the refusal of the episcopal sanction. Indeed, it may be a question, whether, had things remained on the old footing of the three fifths, made necessary to carry any resolution contrary to the opinion of the house of bishops, the weight of their negative would not have had more effect, than under the present change. This would have happened in the following manner. There would always be in the other house a proportion, who would doubt of the validity of a measure, adopted without the episcopal sanction. Some of these would occasionally differ from the bishops, on a subject under consideration. But when the dissent of the bishops should have been declared, those of the description referred to would have thrown themselves into the scale, against the putting of the matter to the test of the three fifths. This supposition has been verified, in a transaction which took place between the two houses of the convention of 1804. It is evident to the author's mind, that owing to the causes stated, while it would be scarcely possible ever to carry a measure against the bishops, there would be a discouragement of even that free discussion with them, which may be expected to take place sometimes, under their present full possession of a negative.

On the above subject, there is an error in the journal, respecting the votes of the lay-gentlemen from Pennsylvania. It is there said, that they were

in favour of the resolution; but voted in the negative, because uninstructed by their constituents. The declaration of the gentlemen is, that they declined voting for a measure of which they approved; because it did not appear from the journals of their state conventions, that the projected change had been laid before them, as the constitution has prescribed. Neither had the gentlemen any recollection, that this was done. The author is persuaded, that the matter was notified to the state convention; but how it happened that an entry was omitted, he knows not.*

The reason of the bishops for postponing the consideration of the degrees of consanguinity and affinity prohibiting marriage, was simply as stated on the journal—the weight of the subject, and the partial attendance at this convention. They did not compare their sentiments, on the many important points which the subject brings into view.

The last subject, had been brought forwards, in consequence of an instruction from the church of Maryland, to the deputies from that state. From the same quarter there was a proposal made, to introduce "A Companion to the Altar," as part of the Prayer Book. The reason of the rejection of the

* It would have been well, had the subject recurred so as to be brought before the convention of 1811, to cause notice to have been given on the journal of that year. But the fact is as here related: and the gentlemen concerned were a little pained, by the misstatement on the preceding journal; although doubtless occasioned by misapprehension or by inadvertence.

proposal by the bishops, was its tending to make the book bulky. Many good treatises, may be usefully bound up with the Prayer Book: but to make them essential parts of it, would be manifestly productive of much inconvenience. Any printer may, at his discretion, do what was solicited on this subject, although he may not notice the Companion to the Altar in the table of contents of the Book of Common Prayer.

It appears from the journal, that the convention has endeavoured—and with propriety as is here conceived—to give a check to the growing practice of instituting associated rectorships. They destroy responsibility, and give occasion to rivalships between pastors of the same parochial church or churches. It is argued in favour of episcopacy, that independently on any arguments from divine institution or from apostolic practice, it has a better tendency than presbytery to peace and order. The last argument, seems to apply with more weight to a congregational, than even to a diocesan. So far as the former connexion, in other denominations, has been known in any considerable degree to the writer of these remarks, it has been generally an illustration of the opinion here expressed. He recollects reading in the works of the celebrated Richard Baxter, that during the prostration of episcopacy in England, the pressing instances of that good man—for such he is here conceived to have been—for the increasing of the number of pastors in the churches, were defeated by the experience of the jealousies con-

stantly occurring, where more than one pastor was settled in any church. This is in a work called, The Reformed Pastor, abridged by S. Palmer, part 2, chap. 9.

At this convention, the bishops were again assailed by the troublesome business of Ammi Rogers; who affected to bring before them an appeal from the judgment of bishop Jarvis and the clergy of Connecticut. There was no doubt on the minds of the two bishops present, that there had been an oversight in not granting to this man a trial, in the church in that state. But the oversight, if they were correct in supposing one, was not theirs; nor was it in their power to correct it. Nothing could have been easier, than the convicting of him of faults, which deserve degradation. But it did not become the bishops to advise the recalling of the act, and the giving of him a trial. There was the less call on the author to do so, because he had already advised this very measure, as did also bishop Moore; on an application made for their opinions on the subject, by the standing committee of the church in Connecticut. But although their opinions had been asked and given, there occurred insuperable difficulty in the seeking of a compliance with them. The bishops had no conference with Rogers; nor would they have noticed his business, had he not employed a gentleman of reputation in the law, to whom something was due on the score of politeness and respect. They spent a whole morning in discussing the matter with this gentleman; but persisted in declining to hear his

pleadings, because not competent to decide. The grounds of the treatment of Rogers, by the house of bishops, at the last convention and at the present, were accurately recorded on the journals. The other house properly refused to intermeddle; and the only reason of the papers being sent to them by the bishops, was their being addressed to both.

On the subject of the Hymns sanctioned by this convention, much was said, as well out of doors, as in the house of clerical and lay deputies. Some members of that body, had contemplated the matter previously to the meeting, and had pressed it with great earnestness. The author of these remarks acknowledges, that it was with pain he saw the subject brought forwards. This was not because he doubted either of the lawfulness of celebrating the praises of God in other strains than those of David, or of the expediency of having a few well selected hymns for the especial subjects of the evangelical economy; which can no otherwise be celebrated in the psalms, than in an accommodated sense. Nevertheless, there is so little of good poetry except the scriptural, on sacred subjects; and there was so great danger of having a selection accommodated to the degree of animal sensibility, affected by those who were the most zealous in the measure; that the discretion of adopting it seemed questionable. It was, however, yielded to by the bishops, under the hope, that the selection of a few and those unexceptionable, although some of them, perhaps, are not to be extolled for the excellence either of the sentiments

or of the poetry, might prevent the unauthorized use of compositions which no rational Christian can approve of. The matter, however, was executed with too much haste. The bishops had merely time to give a cursory reading to the hymns proposed; the result of which was the acceptance of them, with the exception of one hymn, containing a verse that seemed a little enthusiastic. In lieu of this, they proposed another hymn, which was admitted. They who were the most zealous for the measure, had pressed for the admission of about two hundred.

On the subject of hymns, there is ground for considerable apprehensions. Some ministers, and other members of this church, have so strong an inclination to multiply them, that, whatever might be in future the number of those allowed, there would be at every convention a wish for more. Others, are aware of the inconvenience of this continual enlargement, but press for the setting aside of some of those selected, in order to introduce new ones more suited to their taste: not foreseeing, that on the same principle, there will be, in the next convention, new proposers of new hymns, and that this will happen without end. There are some religious societies, who think it ungodly to introduce, into the worship of the sanctuary, any other singing than that of the Psalms of David. This is unreasonable: but are we not running into the opposite extreme?

The principles which prevail in the estimation of the author, and which he proposes under subjection to the saying—"valeant quantum possunt valere"—

that is, let them pass for what they are worth—are these.

In regard to the general subjects of psalmody, as the attributes of God, the mercies of creation and of providence, and what comes under the character of preceptive, or under that of devout desire and pious purpose, he knows of no other compositions which have proved equally interesting to his mind: and without making his feelings a test of those of other persons, he cannot forget, that these compositions were the liturgy of the Jewish church, when its devotions were joined in by the divine Author of our religion. It is no small argument in favour of the heavenly origin of the Old Testament, that strains of devotion, so far excelling whatever the world knows of prayer practised by the wisest men among the heathen, should adorn the worship of a people far below some other nations in the cultivation of the human intellect. It should be added, that there is no small proportion of the Psalms, so evidently pointing to the Messiah and his spiritual kingdom, as only to require acquaintance with the contents of the New Testament, in order to their being accommodated to the celebration of the mercies of redemption.

Nevertheless, as it is by the Gospel that "Life and immortality are brought to light;" there would seem to be a suitableness to its high design, in celebrating its prominent subjects in definite terms: so that the nativity, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the ascension, the descent of the Holy Ghost at pentecost, and other edifying events, embodied with

Christian doctrine and essential to it, may reasonably be rendered the more impressive, by their being carried to the heart on the wings of poetry and of music.

It is not intended to allege, that we are to stop here. But there is no hesitation to confess, that additions, if made, should be with a sparing hand; and then only admitted, when besides sound doctrine and weighty sense, the composition be such, as a poet of acknowledged genius would not be ashamed to own.

As to the loading of our book with the same truths in a diversity of language and of metre, or, in any other way, the seeking of variety for its own sake, there is pleasure in recording the opinion, that it will never tend to the sustaining either of truth or of devotion. When devout feelings have often accompanied certain words, the one bring the other along with them, by the law of association. This should be no hindrance to as much variety as is suited to the diversity of subject; yet it discountenances variety, admitted for the gratification of restless fancy. As to that species of hymns, which affects to clothe devout desire in the language of human passion, it is to be hoped, that we shall continue to repel every effort for their admission.

One effect of gratifying the passion for a continued addition to the number of hymns, and for expressing the same sentiments in a variety of forms, would be the swelling of the Prayer Book to an immoderate size. Again, the probable effect of this,

would be the sometimes editing of the book without either hymns or metre psalms under the same cover; as may be done at any time without offence against any existing regulation; since they are no parts of the said book, but make a book by themselves. Accordingly, selections from it may be made by any parochial minister, at his discretion; and either be bound with the book of Common Prayer, or kept in a separate manual for the use of his congregation, and of others to whom it may be eligible. Something like the latter, the author has seen in sundry churches in England; in which all the metrical compositions in use are on a large sheet of pasteboard, and kept hanging in the pews.

It may be proper, to guard the above from being so misconstrued, as to be a sanction for the publishing of the book of Common Prayer, with the omission of any portion of it, properly coming under any head of the table of contents. This was done in a former day, by an omission of the book of Psalms, and an insertion of the selections only: which unauthorized act, being made known to the convention of 1801, produced the canon now numbered as the 43d, "Prescribing the mode of publishing authorized editions of the book of Common Prayer, &c." But "The Articles of Religion," and "The Ordinal," are each of them a distinct book, although resting on the same authority; so that "The book of Common Prayer," with or without them, may be complete.

The subject of hymns has so evidently a bearing on that of the psalms, that it will not be irrelevant, and will be justified by the liberty which the author stipulated for in the preface, to give the outlines of his theory concerning the latter. It has produced some variety of opinion; although not in any such extent, as to endanger the peace of our churches.

In the primitive church, says the learned Bingham, "the joining of all the worshippers in the psalmody, was the most ancient and general practice, till the way of alternate psalmody was brought into the church." May every attempt to supercede the former by an exclusive method, prove abortive.

Is there, then, to be interdicted an higher grade of musical performance, calling for acquirements of more study, and confined to the select members of a choir? Far from us be the opinion, that there should be wanting any matter which can help to swell the notes of Christian praise; and, that all improvement in this line should be surrendered to mere amusement and to licentiousness: but, let it be admitted on the indispensable condition, of subserviency to the worship of him who so framed the ear as to be delighted by melody and by harmony; and especially, rather than the permission of a contrariety to that end in sounds characterized by levity, let it be kept at a distance from the sacred enclosure of the house of God. The same reason, applies to the aid of instruments. They may contribute to the effect of sentiment and of voice: but when there are emitted from them sounds hostile to every devout desire,

there is no person impressed by a serious sense of the duties of the place, who would not rather see them committed to the flames.

It is stated by bishop Lowth, in his dissertation prefixed to his translation of the prophecy of Isaiah, that the book of Psalms was originally in metre. He considers the fact as proved by certain parts of them, in which there are alphabetical marks of the beginnings of lines and of stanzas. To the same purpose Josephus affirms, that David wrote his psalms in trimeters and pentameters.

This metre was not of the same number of syllables, as among the Greeks and the Latins; but, to use the words of the bishop, "that relation and proportion of one verse to another, which arises from the correspondence of terms, and from the form of construction; from whence results a rythmus of propositions, and a harmony of sentences."

The pronunciation of the Hebrew language had become lost, long before the age of the Gospel; principally in consequence of its want of vowels: so that the subsequent invention of vowels by the Masorets, has never recovered the pronunciation with certainty. Hence, the original metre is unknown: and even in the age of the Gospel, the worship of the temple was with the psalms in the prosaic form.

The chanting of them in this form, will for ever claim the merit of their having been so sung, in the worship attended on by our blessed Savour and his apostles; and of their having continued to be so sung in the primitive church, and afterwards, universally

until the reformation. In the compiling of the liturgy of the church of England, no metrical singing was contemplated: so that when Sternhold and Hopkins made their version, it came in silently, under the general license to sing any portion of Scripture. To this day in England, it is only under the cover of the said permission, that either the said version, or the more poetic version of Tate and Brady shelters itself. In the American church, the latter is expressly sanctioned.

How can the sanction be reasonably censured, as treating the words of Scripture irreverently? For the singing of the psalms in the original, none contend: and as for the original measure, the recovery of it is given up as desperate. To render them intelligible in any modern language, it is necessary to accommodate in a considerable degree to the genius of it. If the accommodation be a little extended for the making of poetic measure, it cannot be unlawful in its principle, provided the sense be faithfully preserved. The same license is often taken in choral music; it being common to make transpositions and other alterations of the words of anthems, although not for the purpose of tying them to metre.

But the license pleaded for is denounced, as a gratifying of sense; and there is an opprobrium at hand, in the expression of a tickling of the ear. What is the use of any poetry, or of any music, but that through the inlets of the gratified senses, there may be an excitement of devout affections? Were it not for this advantage, it were better, that divine

truths should be always uttered, in the plainness of a dress suited to mathematics or to metaphysics.

It has been remarked, that in England, metrical psalmody has been instrumental to schism, having been always the most esteemed by the dissenters from the established church. It is difficult to perceive either the relation of the subjects, or the evidence of the position. In regard to the latter it is notorious, that metrical singing made its way not only to the parish churches, but to the cathedrals, without the sanction of command, or even of especial permission; and that it retains its stand in them, under a provision which had it not in contemplation. If the dissenters have not manifested the same regard for an higher grade of singing, it should be remembered, that at their origin, there was an ideal association of this with other matters; that it has been hereditary; and that we know not how far this may have been the result of another association—meaning of the subject with the supposed attribute of levity: for which too much cause has been given in faulty performance.

As to the churches of the establishment, it is probable that there is not one of them in which metrical singing is not practiced; although any parochial clergyman might banish it, without offence against any institution of his church.

The gratifying of popular taste by the use of metre, has been urged to its disgrace. Now to sacrifice truth to the opinion of the high or of the low, must be grievous sin. But on a question of taste, if

that of the people can be laid hold on for the increase of their piety, it would be difficult to prove this an error: as much so, as to do the like in reference to the improvement of a talent for elocution, with the hope of rendering it instrumental to popular edification.

After all, it must be acknowledged of our metre, requiring as it does lines answering to one another in the numbers of their syllables, that it is very unequal to the force of what must have been accomplished by Hebrew verse, as described by bishop Lowth; according to which, each line contained a complete sense. He calls the lines parallelisms: and he distinguishes them into—the synonymous, the antithetic, and the synthetic or consecutive. These names are descriptive of the diversity; and the examples given by him are proof, how exceedingly all our translations in metre fall short of those poems in their original forms.*

* In order to illustrate the sense of the bishop concerning parallelisms, the following examples are given from among those exhibited by him.

THE SYNONYMOUS.

"Bow thy heavens, O Jehovah, and descend;
"Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke:
"Dart forth lightning, and scatter them;
"Shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them."

Ps. cxliv. 5, 6.

THE ANTITHETIC.

"They are bowed down, and fallen;
"But we are risen, and maintain ourselves firm."

Ps. xx. 8.

As to what is commonly called rhyme, in which the lines answer to one another, not only in the number of syllables, but in sound or jingle; if, as is alleged, there is something in the genius of the English language, rendering such an artificial construction, peculiarly agreeable; it is difficult to devise any principle on which it should be interdicted. And yet, the opinion here entertained is, that the most to be claimed for it is endurance, until there shall be exhibited a translation stript of it, and in other respects worthy of adoption. Certainly, there are psalms which have never been put into this chain, nor perhaps into that of syllabic measure, without material deterioration.

In regard both to metre and to rhyme it must be confessed, that sometimes by the throwing in of a superfluous word, to suit that species of translation, there is caused a considerable departure from the original. Besides, there is commonly a suspending of the

" For his wrath is but for a moment, his favour for life;
" Sorrow may lodge for the evening, but in the morning gladness." Ps. xxx. 5.

The Antithesis is in each of the lines. Sometimes it comprehends a couplet, each line having a complete sense.

THE SYNTHETIC, OR CONSECUTIVE.

" Whatsoever Jehovah pleaseth,
" That doeth he in the heavens and in the earth;
" In the sea and in all the deeps:
" Causing the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth;
" Making the light'nings with the rain;
" Bringing forth the wind out of his treasures."
Ps. cxxxv. 6, 7.

sense of one line on what is to follow in another: which is contrary to the example of Hebrew verse.* In addition to all this, it is often necessary to take in so much of what has been suggested by the brain of the modern poet, as that the sentiment of inspiration is diluted in the exuberance of language, and sustains a material diminution of its strength.†

* The difference may be illustrated, by the following lines from the fourth psalm. In the first line, the sense is suspended for the second: and in the third, the same is done, in a dependence on the fourth, a disadvantage sometimes aggravated by an absurd flourish on the organ. But in the other four lines, what the bishop calls a consecutive parallelism is complete, and remarkably beautiful.

3 " Consider that the righteous man
" Is God's peculiar choice,
" And when to him I make my prayer,
" He always hears my voice."

4 " Then stand in awe of his commands,
" Flee every thing that's ill:
" Commune in private with your hearts,
" And bend them to his will."

† The two following examples are given from a comparison of the bible translation with that of the book in metre. The lines of the latter are fine, which make them serve the better for instances of the extending of a sentiment over too large a surface.

The comparisons to be made are not intended in disparagement of the version of Tate and Brady: for whether on account of its merits, or from the influence of the recollection of sensibilities, extending as far back as any recollections extend, there is a preference of it to every other of the kind. The imperfection charged on it, is common to all the metrical translations.

There arises the question—What is the line of conduct to be pursued in this church, in consideration of the premises? The answer is, first, in regard to chants, if there be any who have a disrelish for them, let such persons be aware of the high sanction under which they have come down to us; and on that account, let them not dare to make an effort for the excluding of them.* Secondly, in regard to

Bible Translation. Ps. cxiv. 1, 2.

When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion."

Book in Metre.

" When Israel, by the Almighty led,
" Enrich'd with their oppressor's spoil,
" From Egypt march'd, and Jacob's seed
" From bondage in a foreign soil;
" Jehovah, for his residence,
" Chose out imperial Judah's tent,
" His mansion royal, and from thence,
" Through Israel's camp his orders sent."

Bible Translation. Ps. cxxxvii. 1.

" By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept, when we remembered Zion."

Book in Metre.

" When we our weary limbs to rest,
" Sat down by proud Euphrates' stream,
" We wept, with doleful thoughts opprest,
" And Sion was our mournful theme."

The whole of these two psalms are an illustration to the purpose.

* There is an advantage incidental to chants, and worthy of notice: it is the exclusion of light airs, which, tacked to the

psalms in metre, rendered by habit dear to many devout minds; and there being in the use of them, a readiness to the desirable object of a general joining of the people; let not the taste for a species of singing which requires more of science, invade the ground on which they stand. And, thirdly, let not that high grade of choral praise be undistinguishingly rejected by those who have no fancy for it. Rather let it be encouraged with moderation; under the condition rigorously required, not only of there being nothing of levity, but of there being a tendency to the excitement of devout affections. And let the advocates of it be aware of the disgust, which will and ought to be excited by a violation of this condition; and of the dissatisfaction which will be the reasonable result even of a defect of skill in the performance.

It is probable that the chants, the metre psalms, and the choral anthems, might all be profitably laid aside, in the event of an approach in the English language, to Hebrew verse as above described by

plain words of Scripture, would be offensive, not to say to every pious, but to every decent person. There are some religious people—it is surprising—who would introduce into metre psalmody, the fashionable tunes of festivity and sport. The reason offered is—why should the best tunes be exclusively the property of Satan? The author is not prepared to pass such a judgment on those tunes; which are not sinful, so long as they are used within the bounds of innocency. But if they be indeed the property of the aforesaid personage, let us be just even to him, and permit him to keep his own. Rational and evangelical devotion has no occasion for them, however suited they may be to the extravagances of enthusiasm.

bishop Lowth; and of which he says in another part of his dissertation, that the harmony of it arose "from accents, tones, and musical modulations." But the bishop evidently considered this as unattainable even in the Hebrew.

On a retrospect of the transactions of this convention, there is entertained the trust, that it did not end without a general tendency to consolidate the communion; although, in the course of the business, there had been displayed more than in any other convention, the influence of some notions leading far wide of that rational devotion, which this church has inherited from the church of England. The spirit here complained of, was rather moderated than raised higher during the session. But it being liable to be combined with schemes of personal consequence; there is no foreseeing, to what lengths it may extend in future. On the part of those inimical to the contemplated evil, the proper preservative—and may God grant that it may be applied—is the cultivating of an enlightened zeal in favour of the doctrines of our holy religion, as revealed in Scripture; and hitherto maintained in their integrity, by this church.*

Lest what is said concerning schemes of personal consequence should bear the appearance of an insinuation not to be sustained by any fact; the author finds himself called on to specify an attempt made to congregate some select clergymen in Baltimore, at the time of the general convention, as a distinct body, and for the greater increase of piety. The tendency of such a scheme, must be obvious. Almost all of the invited clergymen saw the matter in a proper point of view, and declined the invitation. The consequence was, that the project came to nothing.

Q. p. 33. *Of the Convention in* 1811.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and the reverend Dr. Wilkins in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries of the two houses, were the Rev. Philo Shelton of the former, and the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin of the latter. Bishop Claggett, who was to have opened this convention with a sermon, being detained by sickness, that office was performed by the presiding bishop.

This convention was held under very serious and well founded apprehensions, that the American church would be again subjected to the necessity of having recourse to the mother church, for the episcopacy; or else of continuing it without requiring the canonical number; which might be productive of great disorder in future. Bishop Moore had been lately visited by a paralytic stroke, and was supposed to be incompetent to the joining in a consecration, unless in his chamber: which was contemplated as the last resort. Bishop Claggett, after severe indisposition, was so far recovered as to be encouraged to attempt the journey; but after proceeding a few miles, found himself under the necessity of returning. Bishop Madison thought himself not at liberty to leave the duties of his college.* The author left home, under the hope of inducing bishop Provoost to go on to New Haven; although he had never per-

* It appears from a letter of bishop Madison to the author, that these duties had been made the more imperative by the solemnity of an oath.

formed any ecclesiastical duty, since the consecration of bishop Moore in 1801. But besides bishop Provoost's being under the effects of a slight stroke of the paralytic, sustained two years before; he was, at this time, only beginning to recover from the jaundice. He found himself utterly incompetent to the taking of a journey; but promised, if possible, to assist in a consecration, if it should be held in the city of New York. With the expectation of this, bishop Jarvis, after the rising of the convention, came with the author to the said city; as did the two bishops elect. To the last hour, there was danger of disappointment. On our arrival, a day also having been publicly notified for the consecration, we found that bishop Provoost had suffered a relapse during our absence. But finally, he found himself strong enough to give his attendance; and thus, the business was happily accomplished.

What is mentioned on the journals, in relation to the introduction of episcopacy into the western states, arose from a correspondence which had been entered into between the author and the Rev. Joseph Doddridge, who had been ordained by him many years before; and who lives near the western line of Pennsylvania, which divides it from Virginia. This gentleman wrote in behalf of himself, and of a few other clergymen settled in those western regions. The line of direction given to this business by the convention, renders it premature to say much concerning it at present. The hindrances to the carrying of the design of the preceding general conven-

tion into effect, were the difficulty of selecting a suitable person, and that of supporting him. The same difficulties are to be apprehended, in the new shape of the business. There is this difference in the two designs. According to the former, the bishop would have been on the missionary plan, selected and paid on this side of the mountains. If the latter idea should be realized; the churches to the westward must be organized, and a bishop must be chosen by themselves.

It appears on the journal, that the convention were called on to give their sanction to the endeavours of the Episcopalians in Connecticut, for the establishment of an Episcopal academy with corporate powers. This design, originated in the exclusive constitution of the college in that state, which is entirely in the hands of congregationalists; and is so patronized by the government, and so supplied with occasional grants of money from the treasury, as is thought to amount to a species of state establishment of a particular religious denomination. It is considerably owing to this circumstance, that there is a degree of dissatisfaction between the episcopalians and the dominant society, beyond what prevails in any other state in the union.

The application to the society (in England) for the propagating of the gospel, originated in the following circumstances. Before the revolution, and when the state now known by the name of Vermont was considered as part of the province of New Hampshire, governor Wentworth, in his grants of

the western lands of that province, laid out in every township a tract for the use of the episcopal church, which should in future be within the limits of the township; and conveyed the lands so given to the said society. Some of these lands are within the present bounds of New Hampshire, and the rest are in Vermont. After the peace of 1783, the society conveyed the former to certain gentlemen, within the state to which they belonged. The present application, for a similar grant of the lands in Vermont, was with the view of making them productive, for the accomplishing of the original object of the grants.

It appears further on the journal, that two Rev. gentlemen, Benjamin Benham and Virgil H. Barber, made to the convention an application, the purport of which is not recorded; but became an object of attention in conversation, during and after the session; besides its occasioning of a debate at the time, in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The subject is contemplated as likely to be a cause of future litigation, and therefore now noticed with sorrow. The object of the two gentlemen alluded to, was to procure a declaration of the invalidity of lay-baptism: and they were said to be conscientiously scrupulous of admitting as members of their congregations, persons who had received no other.* This of course

* One of the two clergymen (Mr. Barber) distinguishing themselves as above, a few years after, became a Roman Catholic In the communion thus joined by him, it is not uncommon for midwives to baptize. It is a well known property of extremes, that they are often seen making the connecting points of a circle.

precluded accessions, except on the condition of compliance with their proposal, from the most numerous denomination in the state: their baptism by the congregational ministers, being considered as performed by laymen. Although the clergymen referred to were singular in carrying the matter so far; yet there has been an increasing tendency in some of the clergy, to administer episcopal baptism to such as desire it, on alleged doubts of the validity of former baptism. Even this is contrary to the rubrics, as is proved by many judicious divines of the church of England. It happened, that a distinguished lay-member of the convention—the Hon. Rufus King—had brought with him a pamphlet lately sent to him from England; containing a judgment recently given in an ecclesiastical court of that country, in a case precisely to the point. It was occasioned by a suit brought by a dissenter against a parish minister, for refusing to bury a child, who had been baptized by a minister dissenting from the establishment. The judge—sir John Nichols—decided it against the clergyman. His reasons, grounded altogether on the rubrics, must carry conviction to every mind, so far as concerns the question of the sense of the church of England. It is true, that this does not settle the question of the sense of Scripture. On the most serious consideration of the subject many years ago, conviction is entertained, that the holy scriptures and the church are not at variance in this matter. What adds to the sorrow felt, at the introduction of a new ground of difference in the American church, is the

observing, that it never existed in the mother church, until about the year 1712; and that it had then the strongest appearances of a political manoeuvre, played off against the family on whom the succession to the crown had been settled by act of parliament.*

If the prejudice should prevail, it is very unfortunate that two of our bishops (Dr. Provoost† and Dr. Jarvis) never received baptism from an episcopalian administrator. So that who knows what scruples this may occasion, as to the validity of many of our ordinations; and among the number, those of the very two gentlemen, who made the stir at the late convention. It is true, that to meet this difficulty, the distinction is devised, of the possibility of transmitting the episcopal succession through persons, who are not members of the christian church. This was the sense of Mr. Lawrence, who wrote with much zeal on the subject, about the time above referred to. But Dr. Hickes, who corresponded with

* James the first, when he ascended the throne of England, and probably his son Charles the first who succeeded him, had been baptized in Scotland by non-episcopalian ministers. And at the restoration of Charles the second, when the great mass of persons who had grown up during the troubles, had been non-episcopally baptized; it does not appear, that any motion was made to rebaptize them. This confirms the sentiment, that when the doctrine was broached in the reign of queen Anne, it was in hostility to the Hanoverian family.

† Bishop Provoost was of an episcopalian family: but from some local or accidental cause, was baptized by a minister of the low Dutch church. Bishop Jarvis, had been born and educated among the congregationalists.

Mr. Lawrence relatively to the main question, and harmonized with him in it, disagreed with him on the subordinate point of a man's being a bishop, without being a christian. Dr. Hickes is high in the esteem of all the gentlemen, who incline to the opinion of the invalidity of lay baptism. Therefore, who can tell to what extent his sentiment may prevail, and what inconveniences it may occasion? There would be no certainty of the existence of a bishop in christendom.

In England, the scruple arose in the latter end of the reign of queen Anne, when there opened the prospect of introducing the pretender. It was a political measure to serve that cause, and fell with it. A reproach was thrown on the electoral family, that they were unbaptized lutherans: as is noticed in Tindal's continuation of Rapin—(p. 725, of vol. 3. of the continuation the first.)

In confirmation of the preceding statement, there shall be given in a note an extract from a charge of archdeacon Sharp to the clergy of his archdeaconry. His book is a body of charges delivered by him on the rubrics and the canons. He gives an account of a meeting held at Lambeth, of the two archbishops, and all the bishops who were in town. The year in which their conference was held—1712—shows the coincidence of the occasion with the existing state of politics. The assembled prelates determined unanimously in contrariety to the scruple, which the artifice had excited.

As Mr. Lawrence's well known book on lay baptism was issued about the same time, it was probably in aid of the political design. For Dr. Sharp's account of the matter, see the note.*

* "In that year, (1712) the dispute about the invalidity of lay-baptism running pretty high, the two archbishops, with all the bishops of their provinces that were in town, came unanimously to this resolution, *that lay-baptism should be discouraged as much as possible;* but *if the essentials had been preserved in a baptism by a lay hand, it was not to be repeated.* But then, when it was proposed that a declaration of their sentiments to this purpose should be published, in order to silence or determine the debates raised on this question, it was resolved upon mature deliberation, to leave the question as much undecided by any public declaration, as it was left in the public offices and canons of the church, for the better security of discipline, and to prevent any advantages that might be taken by dissenters, or seem to be given them, in favour of their baptisms: though they do not properly come within the question of lay-baptisms in cases of extremity."

Dr. Sharp professes to have taken the above from the original papers signed by the two archbishops.

The matter above referred to, as intended to be left undefined, was not the rebaptizing by the form at large, or by the hypothetical form, for against both of these measures, the archdeacon cautions his clergy. But, as in the English book of common prayer, in the introductory instrument entitled "Concerning the Service of the Church," a minister under doubt is directed to have recourse to the ordinary, and as a doubt may occur concerning the words to be made use of in the admission of a child privately baptized—"I certify that all is well done, &c." not because of the insufficiency of the administrator, but on account of the irregularity of the act, the minister is counselled by Dr. Sharp to avail himself of the said proviso, attached to the preface of the book of common prayer.

There being notice on the journals of the rejection of a request of a clergyman in Connecticut, and no reason given, it comes within the design of these statements, to record the case.

The book is well esteemed; and it was not from dissatisfaction with it, that the application was rejected; but because the request to enjoin the use of the chants and tunes exclusively of all others, was thought unreasonable. The expectation of the applicant has been misunderstood by some; who have supposed, that he included in his demand the prohibition of the singing of psalms in metre. It is true, that he disapproves of such singing, from the opinion that it has an alliance with schism. But he meant no further, than as regarded chanting and the singing of anthems. Yet to have gratified him, would have been an high exercise of power. To set ecclesiastical authority at work on a subject, which heretofore, in the church of England and in this church, and probably in every other, has been left at large; would not forward, but hinder the carrying of more important discipline into effect.

This is not said, without the being aware of the great abuse abounding in the department of psalmody, partly, by leaving the portions to be sung to the choice of clerks destitute of judgment; and partly, by singing tunes either unsuitable to divine worship; or suitable to some of the sacred compositions, yet not to those with which they are unskilfully connected. It was designed to guard against both of these evils, by the rubric prefixed to the book of psalms in

metre. That provision, if applied, is a sufficient remedy for both. If any thing further should be attempted, in a field open to so great a diversity of taste; it is probable, that no convention would assemble, without projected improvements prepared to be laid before them. The fault of the unnecessary extension of authority, would be felt in changes without end.

In consequence of a canon passed at the convention of 1804, there was drawn up by the house of bishops, and sent to the house of clerical and lay deputies a pastoral letter, addressed to the members generally of this church. It had been understood, that this was a transaction, over which the latter house were to have no control.

Philadelphia was fixed on as the next place of meeting; and, as in the last convention, the business was concluded with prayer by the presiding bishop, in presence of both houses.

POSTSCRIPT.

The consecration which took place in Trinity church in the city of New York, May 29, 1811, soon after the rising of the convention, may be considered as in some sort the unfinished business of it. Accordingly, any important circumstance attending the said act, may properly have a place in these statements.

Such a circumstance occurred during the service, and was the consequence of the inadvertence of

the author; who, in the imposition of hands on each of the two bishops elect, omitted the words—"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The officiating bishop was unconscious of the omission; and the first intimation of it to him, was by bishop Jarvis in the way from church.

Although the author regretted what had happened; yet he had no expectation, that any conclusion would be drawn from it, for the impeaching of the validity of the act. Neither would this have happened, if it had not fallen in with the passions which had been excited by the late election in New York.

Not long after the consecration, it was published to the world, that the supposed act of consecration was essentially defective, because of the want of those solemn words. Lamentations were made concerning the consequences which may ensue, to affect the episcopal succession through future ages; altogether owing to its invalidating of bishop Hobart's episcopal character: for not a word was said in the publications, of its having of the same effect on bishop Griswold's; although all the gentlemen who had noticed the omission, testified that it applied to both the cases.

The clamour thus raised, was of course met with the denial, that any precise form of words was essential to such an occasion. But this not producing silence, inquiry was made into the history of the form, as it stands in the ordinal: when it appeared, that the words in question were no part of the form of the church of England, until the reign of Charles

the 2d; were never in that of the primitive church; and are not in the Roman pontifical, at this day. So that on the principle of the opposite argument, there is not at this time a Christian bishop in the world.*

Then the objection took a new turn, and was rested on the preface to the ordinal; which requires the consecration to be conducted, agreeably to the form in that book. According to this, the accidental omission of a word or two, contained in the book, must invalidate any consecration or ordination, in which it may happen. The absurdity being stated as a consequence, the answer was, that in this instance, the omitted words involve an important doctrine of our holy religion. It was replied, that the doctrine appears in many places in the service; and that it is manifestly inconsistent to yield, that the mention of the trinity during the imposition of hands, is not essential on the mere ground of the importance of the doctrine; to yield further, that necessity is not created by positive institution only; and yet to contend, that these united render the words indispensable.

The disposition manifested soon spent itself; owing, as is conceived, to the circumstance, that a few gentlemen of talents, who had interested themselves on the occasion, without having been in the habit of attending to the concerns of the church, would not commit their characters by joining in a criticism so indefensible.

* See bishop Sparrow's collection, and De Courayer's defence of the English ordinations.

R. Page 39. *Of the Convention in* 1814.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops, and the Rev. Dr. Croes in the house of clerical and lay deputies. The secretaries of the two houses, were, of the former, the Rev. Jackson Kemper, and of the latter, the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, assisted by James Milnor, Esq.

The opening sermon, was by bishop Hobart of New York.

The object at present, as in relation to transactions of former conventions, is principally to bring into view some facts which might otherwise be forgotten, after having had an influence in the determination of the measures adopted.

The 9th canon, which dispenses with certain literary qualifications in some cases, had been misunderstood; and abused to the sustaining of the notion, that the qualification serving for a substitute is mere fluency of speech; evidently found in some very ignorant men, and even in some whose understandings are naturally weak. It was thought, that a solemn declaration, guarding against the error, might be of use.

The alteration of the 29th canon, was occasioned by a difference found in the diocesan constitutions; and by a wish not to interfere therewith, but to leave them to their respective operation. In some states, no minister, not provided with a parish, and no deacon, has a seat or vote in the convention. In others, a contrary provision had been made. What brought

the subject into view at this time, was a change which had taken place in Connecticut: the old law of excluding non-parochial ministers and deacons, having given way to the contrary regulation; much to the dissatisfaction of some of the clergy. The difference, did not come under question in the general convention. But it seemed reasonable in this body, while they avoided including the two descriptions of persons alluded to, in the provision for the office of institution; not to interfere with the economy of those dioceses, wherein they were admitted.

The opinion is here avowed, that the latter course is the most proper; although not alleged to be necessary. Otherwise, the church may be deprived of the counsel of some of the ablest of her ministers, who are prevented from the acceptance of parishes by allowable causes; for example, the filling of professorships in literary institutions. Besides, there may be aged clergymen, unfit for active service; and yet, not the less competent to the giving of advice. It is a very great injury to religion, what has occasionally happened, and will be especially apt to occur in every large city, that a man in holy orders may find it an eligible place of residence, for enjoyment or for the management of some secular business. His may life be a scandal to the church: and yet, it would be thought unreasonable to subject him to religious discipline, under a constitution not acknowledging him, as having an interest in it.

What was done in relation to the 40th canon, was at the instance of the clerical members from

Connecticut. The canon provides, that every clergyman shall keep a list of his adult parishioners. In the said state, considerable difficulty was alleged to have arisen, as to what may be called a joint act, in the case of a person baptized in some other communion, but joining his or herself to this church. In the case supposed, the joint act, must have been of the person and of the minister recording his name. Under existing circumstances, it does not appear how the query could have been solved, except in the way suggested by the bishops: that is, by bringing the matter to the test of whatever was considered by both of the parties, as tending to the effect contemplated. It must be confessed, however, that this manifests an imperfect state of discipline. The subject is worthy of the provision of a religious form, with the view of establishing the certainty of the transaction. But to make such a provision consistent, none besides persons of fair characters should be admitted within the pale: others to be allowed as hearers, and even to occupy sittings within a church, but not to have votes in its concerns.

There was nothing further done in relation to the canons, except the making of a slight alteration in the 45th; designed to dispense with the duty of reading in the general convention, the reports of the conventions in the different states.

Perhaps some reason may be required for the delay still occurring in regard to the review of the Homilies, recognized as they are in the articles. There had been some correspondence on the subject

between two of the bishops, the Author and bishop Hobart. But it is involved in more difficulty, than would easily be supposed by any person, who has not attended to it particularly. That besides verbal alterations, some others are called for, is universally agreed. But to make the latter, without departing from the principle of avoiding the charge, and even of giving plausible ground to any to pretend, that we have deviated in respect to doctrine, is scarcely to be expected. On this account the author is not sure, that it will not be best to leave the two books as they now stand: being referred to in the articles, as a larger explication of Christian doctrine; without its being understood, that assent to the article implies approbation of every sentiment in the Homilies, or of every series of reasoning whereby any doctrine of them is sustained. At the same time, if any minister incline to read a homily from his pulpit or from his desk, and will take the trouble of clearing it from its obsolete terms and local references, (if there be any) there is nothing to hinder his doing so. In another point of view, however, it appeared of the utmost consequence to take some measure, in regard to those very instructive compositions. Their being sanctioned by the 35th article, which is assented to by all persons admitted to the ministry, renders it absolutely necessary that they should have the means of perusing them, and even of well weighing their contents. This is not always easily to be accomplished. Accordingly, it was judged expedient to encourage a publication of them; with a caution against

its being understood, that this church is concerned in what relates to the civil policy of Great Britain. Under these views of the subject, they have since been printed.

For the sense of the house of bishops, delivered by them on this subject, see Appendix No. 27.

The measure which appears on the minutes, designed to introduce the posture of standing during the act of singing portions of the psalms and of the hymns in metre, requires to be accounted for. It professes to have been adopted for the avoiding of diversity of custom. But there may be an interesting question, as to the cause of that diversity.

It is evident, that psalms in metre are not known in the rubrics of the church of England. And yet, it was provided in the very beginning of the reformation, by the act of uniformity then passed, that psalms or prayers, taken out of the Bible, might be used in divine service, provided it were not done to the omitting of any part thereof. This was in the reign of Edward the 6th. In the course of that reign, Sternhold and Hopkins edited their version; which must have been brought into use, not by any special act of authority, but under the sanction of that provision. These facts have been stated, in a preceding part of the present work. They are again referred to, in order to make them a ground of the supposition that the posture of sitting grew out of the laxity of manner, in which this part of the public devotion was introduced. When the present writer was in England, during the whole of the year 1771 and

nearly the half of 1772, he was not in any church wherein the people stood, at the singing of the metre psalms. He does not remember to have seen it, during his short visit to that country, about 15 years afterwards. And yet it seems well attested of late, that the posture of standing prevails in London and its vicinity, and elsewhere. It is said to have been introduced by the late excellent bishop of London—Dr. Porteus: and this is very probable. The custom had travelled to some congregations in this country; wherein, until lately, it is not probable that there was a single congregation who stood, during this part of the service. In order to put an end to the diversity, and under the conviction that standing is the more fit and decent posture, the bishops proposed, and the other house approved of the measure which has been adopted.

For this document, see Appendix, No. 28.

It appears on the journal, that on a proposal of a presbyter of this church, to add to the anthems serving on certain festivals instead of the "Venite," certain forms from the psalms, &c. prepared by himself with musical accompaniments, the house of bishops proposed, and were concurred with by the house of clerical and lay deputies, a determination not to enter on a review of the book of Common Prayer, during the present session: which may seem too general for the occasion. Certainly the two houses, had it so pleased them, might have proposed to the next convention a particular change, without going a step farther. But had it been moved by any member, and

made a subject of discussion, any other member might have done the same; so that a general review might have been the consequence. As for the anthems, they were such as might have been expected from the musical sufficiency of the proposer. There was another matter of a different nature, comprehended under the determination of the two houses. A Rev. member of the convention had brought to it a manuscript work of his own, on an important subject of religion, which he wished to be sanctioned by the body. It is not easy to calculate the time they might have been kept together, for a due examination of a work of this sort; nor how many similar applications in future would have grown out of compliance in the present instance. The reasons of the conventional measures in the above cases, are recorded with the hope, that they will have weight on the like occasions, if they should occur.

For the determination, see the Appendix, No. 29.

The reference to the bishops and to other ecclesiastical authorities, for the obtaining of information on the subject of a theological school, originated thus. The convention in South Carolina, had instructed their deputies to propose the establishing of such an institution; and accordingly, it had been moved and discussed in the house of clerical and lay deputies, and by them negatived. On the last day of the session, it was moved in the house of bishops, by the bishop of the church in that state. The question was argued with much interest, although with the utmost moderation, by that bishop on one side,

and by the assistant bishop of the church in the diocess of New York, on the other. The design interfered especially with the views of the latter; who had adopted measures and issued proposals, for the instituting of a seminary under the immediate superintendence of himself and his successors. It was to have been seated in New Jersey, and the bishop in that state was to have been joined in the superintendence. The present author, conscious that he had not given much attention to the subject in this comparative view of it, and perceiving that existing circumstances would prevent a determination during the present session, avoided the opening of his mind as to the merits of the question.

The proposal respecting a copy-right of the book of Common Prayer, had been suggested as a mean of obtaining an handsome fund for beneficial purposes. Besides the difficulties in the way, suggested in the instrument relative to the obtaining of information on the subject; there is the insuperable objection, which it seemed the most prudent not to notice, that although the church does not now contemplate alterations in her liturgy, yet she ought not to commit herself in a measure, which would put it beyond her power for a considerable course of years. To have given this as a reason, might have been misunderstood by the public. Independently on that circumstance, there were those who had been formerly witnesses of jealousy excited by this cause, which they wished never to see renewed; so long as there are other ways of guarding the integrity of the book

against corrupt copies. In most and probably all of the present, there are some errata; which, in general, may be detected by the reader; and which might be more effectually guarded against by an authoritative table.

The declaration of the bishops, approved of by the other house, relative to the identity of this church with the body formerly known by the name of "the church of England in America," arose from the circumstance, that in some cause or causes pending in the courts, this identity had been denied.

The bishops were informed by one of their body, that not long ago, the sentiment had been expressed to him by a gentleman high in office, who grounded what he alleged on the book of Common Prayer, edited in 1785. The title of this book declares it to be a proposal. It was never ratified, as will appear on a reference to the journals. Had a subsequent convention ratified it, the inference would have been untenable in regard to a church, the principles of which, as of the church from which it became separated by a dispensation of Providence, declares its competency to every act of self-government. The identity of the body remained, although accompanied by a newly acquired independence. Still the plea, on the ground taken from it, is invalidated by the non-acceptance of the book. It being foreseen, that this pretence will be set up, whenever the appeal shall come on in Washington; there was supposed to be a call for the declaratory instrument, which has occasioned the present explanation.

There was a consideration which rendered the declaration especially expedient but not proper to be noticed on the journal. The opposite principle was the known opinion of some leading characters of Virginia; who, on that ground had defended the act of the legislature of that state, which deprived our communion of its churches and its glebes.

Although the question here referred to, was brought before the convention incidentally; yet, as it may hereafter be a subject of more considerable attention, and big with important consequences; occasion shall be taken to state what the reasons for supporting the position, that what is now called "the Episcopal church in the United States of America," is precisely, in succession, the body formerly known by the name of "the church of England in America;" the changes of name having been the dictate of a change of circumstances, in the civil constitution of the country.*

1st. From the beginning of the organizing of this church, the principle has prevailed. It impelled the applying to England for consecration, in preference to another country, where it might have been easily

* Since the penning of these remarks, the author has seen, in print, a serious endeavour to date the origin of the Episcopal church, from the period of the consecration of her bishops. The position is rested on grounds, which do not here seem to call for a professed refutation: but it may be remarked that the sentiments expressed by the house of bishops, and advocated in this place, apply to the notion now referred to, as well as to that of which they were professedly intended.

had; without the making of requests, not to be complied with but by the interference of the legislature of a foreign country, which the venerable persons petitioned might not be able to obtain.

2dly. It will very much tend to check the spirit of innovation, on any essential point of doctrine: because, if such a matter should be attempted, the original standard will be appealed to; and the adherents to it will plead, that they are the church from which the innovators, whether many or few, have departed. This needs not to hinder alterations in less important matters; because, notwithstanding the parentage gloried in by us, we are an independent church; and so acknowledged by that from which we plead to have descended.

3dly. The security of property, is a consideration. This has been spoken of already: but there shall be added information received from a respectable source. It is, that on the arrival of bishop Seabury in Connecticut, he consulted his friend Dr. Wm. Samuel Johnson of Stratford, whose leaning to him and his cause with a strong attachment to the Episcopal church, cannot be doubted, as to his right to the income of a handsome landed property, left for the support of a future bishop of the church of England in America. Dr. Johnson is said to have been of opinion, that bishop Seabury could not claim it.

4thly, and principally; regard is here had to their being a fence to the truths of the gospel, prevalent in the days of Edward the 6th. Any superad-

ditions, which may have been either popular, or introduced by influential churchmen afterwards, are here put out of view.

The principle contended for cannot be understood, without remarking the distinction between a sameness of two churches in doctrine, discipline, and worship, and their identity in a corporate capacity. When in the reign of James the 1st, and afterwards in that of Charles the 2d, there were consecrated in England bishops for the church of Scotland, the churches of the two countries were the same in the particulars of principle abovementioned; but were so far from being one, that to avoid the appearance of it, and to guard against a consequent ascendancy of the English hierarchy over that of Scotland, it was carefully provided, at each of the times referred to, that the bishops of the latter country should not be consecrated by either of the archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Neither is what is here said, intended to discountenance all changes, which succeeding circumstances may render expedient. In respect to doctrine, if, at any time, for the sake of comprehension, there should be silence on any points not essential to christian verity, and for the sake of comprehension, it would not supersede the principle here sustained. On the subject of rites and ceremonies; it is the judgment of the church of England, that they may be regulated according to the circumstances of different times and places. And under the head of the constitution of the christian church and the discipline of it, there is

no reluctance to record the opinion, that if an important object were likely to be accomplished, there would be no difficulty in taking a ground, which would not be objected to by the more moderate of the non-episcopalians, provided there ceased objections of another kind; especially the greatest hindrance of all, in the irritation kept alive by the intemperate zeal of some on each side. But, if ever there should be a surrendry of those evangelical truths, which are not only affirmed in the 39 articles, but pervade the services, and are generally understood to be the leading doctrines of the reformation, its fall may be counted on; and because of such change, ought not to be regretted.

The maintaining of the above principle, consistently with a strong desire of comprehending bishop Seabury and his church within our connexion, placed the author of this in very delicate circumstances, for some time: especially as he was not so happy as to have the concurrence of bishop Provoost, on the latter subject. The author persevered with him, in the plan of obtaining the canonical number from England; but thought there would be no inconsistency, after the succession had become complete, and even during the measures leading to it, in yielding personal priority to bishop Seabury.

Accordingly, the author will conclude with the expression of a feeling, which from his very early years, has been attendant on his views of religion; and which he cannot clothe in more appropriate words than those of Father Paul of Venice—"Esto

perpetua:" that is, may the church so constituted and continued, last for ever.

Because of the importance of the declaration of the convention on the preceding subject, it is given in the Appendix, No. 30.

S. Page 45. *Of the Convention of* 1817.

Bishop White presided in the house of bishops. In the house of clerical and lay deputies, first Dr. Isaac Wilkins of New York, and afterwards the Rev. Wm. H. Wilmer of Alexandria presided. The secretaries were of the former house, the Rev. Benjamin T. Onderdonk, and of the latter, the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin.

After divine service, and the sermon by bishop Griswold; and in compliance with a resolve of the last convention, there was an administration of the holy communion.

There having appeared at this convention two bishops, in addition to those formerly mentioned; it falls within the design of this work to record, that the first of them, the Rev. Dr. James Kemp of Maryland, was consecrated on the 1st of September 1814, in Christ church, in the city of New Brunswick, New Jersey, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart and Moore; and that the other, the Rev. Dr. John Croes of New Jersey, was consecrated on the 19th day of November 1815, in St. Peter's church in the city of Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart and Kemp.

Opposition having been made to the consecration of bishop Kemp; the three consecrating bishops weighed very seriously the objections presented to their notice: the more so, as among the signers of the protest sent, there appeared the names of persons known to have possessed respectability in the diocess. The detailing of the objections included in the protest, with the reasons of their adjudged irrelevancy, seems called for by regard to the future respectability of the church, and to the consistency of the consecrating bishops.

The first objection was, that the office of a suffragan bishop was unknown in the constitution of the church of Maryland. On this point it was considered, that although neither the office of a suffragan nor that of a coadjutor or assistant bishop, was noticed in the constitution, either of them might be rendered expedient by existing circumstances, as a character often met with in the history of the christian church; that a coadjutor or assistant bishop had been introduced into another diocess, without being mentioned in its constitution, and yet without the charge of unconstitutionality; that as the bishop of the diocess now in question, in the year 1811, had proposed the electing of a bishop to aid him, he must have presumed the legality of the measure, and it did not since appear that he had altered his mind, or that the sentiment had been until now contradicted by any person; that in 1812, the convention had balloted on the question of having a suffragan, and although it was then carried in the negative, it does not appear,

that they were supposed by any of the members to be irregularly occupied. Even the signers of the protest, must have thought it regular at the time.

The second objection, denied that Dr. Kemp had been chosen by a constitutional majority: but the journal manifested the contrary; there appearing, to have been in his favour two thirds of the members present. This objection was stated in such general terms, that it could not have been much relied on.

The third objection imported, that the general opinion concerning the measure of chusing a suffragan, had been expressed by the silence of the convention of 1813; the next after that which had negatived the measure. There may have been some reason for this, which the consecrating bishops had no means of obtaining. The prospect of the returning health of the diocesan bishop, may have been the reason. The bishops however perceived from inspection of the journals, that of 19 clergymen, and 32 lay-men present in the convention of 1813, not a third of either order had been induced to sign the protest. Although there were in this convention two more of the clergy, and seven more of the laity than in that of 1814, when the choice was made; yet the members of the latter were precisely those of 1812; when no fault appears to have been alleged against the balloting for a suffragan, because of the paucity of electors. It was further considered under this head, that the requisition of two thirds for the electing of a bishop, as provided by the constitution of the church of Maryland, and which was sa-

tisfied by the issue of the election in the present instance, was probably for the purpose of guarding against an advantage which might be taken of a thin convention. On any other principle, it would seem to have been unwise to make a provision, by which a sixth of the number and one more, would have it in their power, to arrest at pleasure all episcopal administration in the diocess.

The fourth objection, rested on the charge of surprise and management. Nothing of these, was apparent on the journal. They are not a ground, on which an election may be set aside. In the collision of parties, they are commonly charged by each on the other. On the present occasion, no specific facts were alleged, and no evidence was offered.

On the whole subject of the objections, the bishops were of opinion, that if the substance of the protest was designed to arrest the consecration, it ought to have been communicated to the convention by which Dr. Kemp had been elected; and that after the neglect of this, the defect ought to have been in some measure supplied, by its being made known to the bishops called on to consecrate, that the instrument, which was put into print for the ease of multiplying copies, had been communicated individually to those who were so materially interested in its contents. These remarks, were designed to have an especial bearing on the position of the protest, that the succession of the bishop elect to the diocesan episcopacy was carried by acclamation. The bishops were possessed of evidence, that the question was

put and the vote taken, in the usual form of conventional business. They were the more induced to rely on the testimony to this effect by the circumstance, that among the affirmants of the contrary, there were some who were not present at the disgraceful transaction, if it happened.

In addition to the protest, there was exhibited by the presiding bishop, a letter to him from two clergymen of the diocess, charging the bishop elect with being unsound in the faith, and an enemy to vital godliness. If the signers of the letter had substantiated the first of the two charges, or the latter of them, in the sense understood in Scripture under the term "godliness," essentially involving renovation of the affections manifested in the fruits of holiness, the bishops would have rejected the application before them, from the respectable diocess of Maryland. But, the writers of the letter alleged no specific facts; they referred to no evidence; and the accused party declared, that they had not even notified to him the accusation.

The writers of the letter, demanded a hearing by counsel. Setting aside the insufficiency of the applicants, the novelty of the proposal, and all question of the propriety of such a precedent to be set by any three bishops who might be assembled; it could not but occur to those now present, that the other party in the case would be the convention of Maryland, who had no opportunity of being heard by counsel. Had Dr. Kemp been considered as the other party, there would have been evident impro-

priety in subjecting him to a hearing, under a charge brought against him unexpectedly, and remote from his place of residence. Perhaps it was expected, that the consecration would be delayed, with a view to a future hearing. But neither ought the bishops to have acceeded to this, when it would have been to subject to reproach the character of a clergyman, who had been greatly respected in the diocess during nearly 25 years; and this at the request of two clergymen, who do not appear to have hazarded the charges in the convention; and who, in bringing them forward at this time, must have thought differently from those who joined with them in the protest. For it would be injurious to the religious profession, and to the understandings of the latter, to suppose that they had withheld those charges, while they were urging objections of far less magnitude.*

Those were the reasons, on which the bishops rested their procedure; and they were detailed by them, in a letter to bishop Claggett.

Soon after the consecration of Dr. Kemp, the object of the opposition to him, as it was cherished by some of his opponents, showed itself without disguise. Four or five clergymen, who had obtained the concurrence of some respectable persons in that preparatory measure, but not in what followed, ap-

* It was with a view to an influence on the question of the election of Dr. Kemp, that the story concerning the election of Dr. Griffith noticed in this work (p. 171.) was handed about; probably fabricated by some, but certainly believed without intentional error by others.

plied first to bishop Claggett, and, on his refusal, to bishop Provoost, to consecrate singly the person who should be elected by the applicants. It is not necessary to prove, that the bishops so applied to were men of too much truth and honour, to have considered for a moment of so unprincipled a proposal. But the matter should be remembered, as pregnant with admonition. A bishop of this church, during the service of consecration, after uttering the solemn words—"In the name of God, amen," promises conformity and obedience to the doctrine, the discipline and the worship of this church. According to the application, all the checks designed to govern in admission to the episcopacy, were to be disregarded.

That small number of clergymen exhibited themselves as competent to an act, to which they had recently affirmed an incompetency, in two thirds of the clergy and representatives of the laity, in convention. And all this, was under the profession of serving the cause of vital godliness.

On the subject of a theological school, discussed in the general convention, as set forth on the journal, a plan different from that adopted, was recommended by the convention of Pennsylvania. It was as follows.

"1st. That there be a recommendation to the church in the several states, to raise a fund; the income of which may be applied, as the general wisdom of the church may direct."

"2dly. That wherever there is such a concentration of clergymen, as that they can assemble often, and at convenient times, they may be requested to

bestow their endeavours gratuitously, for the accomplishing of the present object, and,

"3dly. That the income of the contemplated funds be applied to such local endeavours, if thought expedient, so as to secure the especial attention of one or more of the clergy, to be devoted altogether or in part, to the educating of young men for the ministry; until a general plan be adopted, if that should be considered hereafter as more eligible."

The reasons which weighed to the preference of this plan, were—the time intervening between one convention and another—the expediency of limiting the views of that body, to what is essential to the keeping of us together as one church—the danger of local jealousies, and—the easier maintenance of students, under their paternal roofs: which would not always apply according to either of the schemes, but would be much more frequent under that proposed than under the other. There was, however, such a latitude left by the suggestion from Pennsylvania, as that there might hereafter be a general seminary grafted on it, either to the superseding of the local schools, or for the finishing of the education of the scholars, as might be expedient. It is to be hoped, that the other plan, after having been generally adopted, will be universally and with effect supported.

On the subject of improper amusements, there was a controversy of some warmth, in the house of clerical and lay deputies. In the house of bishops, there was unanimity in the course taken. This course as recorded on the journal, and including some sen-

timents in the pastoral letter, addressed to the members of the church generally, and read as usual in the house of clerical and lay deputies, was said to have conciliated to their disappointment, those in the latter house who had pressed for a stronger measure, which had not been carried. There having been misrepresentations of what passed on this subject from speakers on each side; and, as what finally proceeded from the bishops was said to have been satisfactory to each, there may be use in presenting it at large, accordingly, it is given in the appendix, No. 31.

The proposal for the adopting of a standard edition of the bible, was in consequence of the discovery of a large edition, extending very widely a corruption of acts 6, 3, by perverting it to a sanction of congregational ordination. Instead of "whom *we* may appoint over this business," which is the exact translation of the original, the edition has it "whom *ye* may appoint over this business." While the matter was before the house of clerical and lay deputies; a lay member, standing in a pew, and observing a bible, took it to turn to the place in question; when he perceived it to be a copy of the edition, in which the corruption had been detected. The proposal of determining on a standard edition, had been made without the expectation of its being acted on during the session. It was closed with a joint vote of the two houses, to hold the next triennial meeting in the city of Philadelphia; and with prayer by the presiding bishop, before both houses as usual.

Although the object of the "additional statements and remarks," is limited to the proceedings of the general convention of 1817; there being no subsequent transactions which have bearings on the doctrine, or the worship or the discipline of the church; yet it may not be irrelevant to record, that, since that period, there have been consecrated the Rev. Philander Chase, D.D. for the state of Ohio, and the Rev. Thomas C. Brownell D.D. for the state of Connecticut: the former, on the 11th day of February, 1819, in St. James's church, Philadelphia, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart, Kemp, and Croes, and the latter, on the 27th day of October, 1819, in Trinity church, New-Haven, by the presiding bishop, assisted by bishops Hobart and Griswold.

As the act of the convention of 1785 was authenticated by the signatures of all the members of the body; as it laid the foundation of the succeeding transactions; and as it has never been given in full to the public; the only evidence of it being the original, in the possession of the author; it has appeared to him, while the preceding sheets were in the press, that the object of this work calls for the editing of the instrument in its proper form. The address to the English prelates is referred to, but not comprehended in the act. Delicacy having dictated the allowance of reasonable time for the delivery of it.

Neither of the instruments entitled "alterations, &c." has been before published; although the results of them have appeared, in what has been called the

Proposed Book: but, as the book is gradually disappearing, it may be hereafter important, to have an exhibition of them as they stand in the original act. The constitution as then proposed, as ratified in 1786, and as done away in 1789, is in the book of printed journals, but not in any preceding part of this work.

For the said act, see Appendix No. 32.

POSTSCRIPT.

In the foregoing statements and remarks, the more immediate object was the recording of facts, throwing light on the measures of conventional bodies; and the expressing of opinions, which arose out of the various subjects under notice: the opinions being proposed, with the hope that they will have such weight, as on examination may be thought their due. The work being brought to a conclusion, and the reader being qualified to judge of the merits of another motive to be disclosed; it is now declared to be the conviction, that instruction may be gathered from the detail.

1st. On a retrospect of the low condition in which the episcopal church had been left by the revolutionary war; of her clergy, reduced almost to annihilation; of the novelty of the business arising out of the existing crisis; of the despair of many, as to the perpetuating of the communion, otherwise than in connexion with an establishment, from which it was for

ever severed; of an unwillingness to recognize such a severance, although brought about by the providence of God, and the recognizing of it agreeable to a prominent principle in the institutions of the parent church; of a difficulty, to be done away only by legislative acts, which perhaps it would be impossible to obtain, and which we could not apply for, consistently with our civil duties; of the apprehension of conflicting opinions in different sections of the United States, between which there had been hitherto no religious intercourse; of the existence of known differences, on some points; and with all these things, of danger from selfish passions, so apt to intrude under imposing appearances, defeating the best intended endeavours in collective bodies; it must be perceived, that there were formidable obstacles to be surmounted, in combining the insulated congregations, with the respective clergy of those who had any, under an indisputable succession of the episcopacy; and with an ecclesiastical legislature, necessarily differing in form from that under which we had been from the beginning, yet the same with it in principle. The difference between what has been thus looked back on, and the present circumstances of the church, is a ground of gratitude to Almighty God. In what degree, this change of prospect has been promotive of piety and of correct conduct, will not be known until the day which will "try every man's work, whether it be of gold and silver and precious stones," or "of wood and hay and stubble." In the mean time, we have encourage-

ment to proceed, in humble dependence on him, without whom, even "Paul may plant and Apollos may water" in vain.

2nd. It is trusted, that there will be no indecorum, in recalling the attention of the reader to the absence of selfish passion in all the preceding records of the results of ecclesiastical legislation. If those who have been engaged in the proceedings have been supposed in this work to have fallen into error in some instances, it is hoped that the noticing of it will not give offence; especially as it is by one, who, in the same work, has occasionally acknowledged error in himself; and who is ready to believe, that it may have happened to him in many instances, in which he has not sufficient sagacity, nor sufficient distrust of himself, for the detecting of it. He confidently believes of the members of the conventions generally, that they have been actuated by upright motives. Of his brethren in the episcopacy he bears testimony, that he has not seen any occasion, on which any one of them has manifested a disposition to sacrifice principle to any selfish gratification. If there be thought correctness in these remarks, let the example be influential in similar proceedings in future. In all the affairs which interest the human mind, there is the danger of estimating measures, according to their bearings on some purposes, prompted by ambition or by vanity. The purposes, are not always discernible; and there can scarcely occur a question, on which talent, even if it amount to no more than cunning, may not be capable of

drawing to itself a party. In this way, there have arisen most of the dissentions which have torn christendom into sects. As yet, we have been preserved, by the grace of God, from any material inroads of it: and the noticing of the fact may serve, among other weighty considerations, to vigilance against it in future counsels.

3rd. Another lesson arising out of the review, is that of mutual concession in small matters; and even in regard to others more important yet not essential, the bearing with what may not be approved of, under the expectation that it will be found on trial better than had been expected; or, that it will be corrected after more mature consideration. Of the latter especially, many instances have occurred, on questions which, without such forbearance, would assuredly have divided the church into communions censuring, and perhaps perpetuating hostility to one another. As to the other branch of the recommendation, it is clearly the dictate of a due consideration of the various casts of the minds of men. It would indeed be surprising, that any should run into the opposite error; did we not know, how unbending some are in favour of their own opinions, even in matters which cannot be brought before the tribunal of conscience: so that on a question of taste, they are impatient under every decision not conformable to their wishes. The way to bear down the influence of men so fastidious, and under so evident a propensity to disorder, is for those more reasonable to make sacrifices to one another.

4th. It will be a most important use of the review, to notice the undeviating intention of the church, to make no such alterations, as shall interfere with the maintaining of the doctrines of the gospel, as acknowleged at the reformation. That point of time should be kept in mind, in order to protect the church, not only against threatened innovations from without, but also against others which have occasionally showed their heads in the church of England, and may show their heads in this church, betraying a lurking fondness for errors which had been abandoned. Neither have there been wanting some among us, who would have drawn our system towards opinions, which we consider as an approach to infidelity, and a mean of reconciling the mind to it. We were under the suspicion of intending this, in our first efforts for the organizing of the church. It is impossible to verify the suspicion by any of the transactions recorded, or by any of a more private nature: and if individuals harboured the design, which is not here known to have been the case, they saw no opening for the accomplishing of it; and accordingly, permitted it to die within their bosoms. There is this farther use in the reference to the reformation, that it frowns disapprobation on endeavours tending to debase our forms of worship, by the intermixture of devotional exercises of a contrary cast of character. How far this abuse calls for the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, and how far it may be born with, under the expectation that it carries in itself the seeds of its dissolution, is a question partly of

conscience, and partly also of religious prudence. It is a property of the past proceedings of our newly organized church, that the gold found by her in possession, has not been adulterated by any debasing alloy; but that, on the contrary, she has followed the counsel given by the prophet Jeremiah to the Jews, to "ask for the old paths and to walk therein." In one who has kept this object steadily in view, it will not be thought inadmissible, to express his wish and to put up his prayer, that the same integrity of principle may be sustained by those who are now his fellow-labourers, and may be expected to survive him, and by those who may succeed.

If any thing were wanting to confirm him in his sentiments on the present subject, the deficiency would be supplied by the many occasions which have occurred to him, of remarking the vanity and the love of self-exhibition manifested in endeavours to the contrary; a fault, which, if it be sometimes seen to subsist with general rectitude of intentions, is only one instance out of many, verifying our Lord's reproof of another species of misdirected zeal—"ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

5thly. These memoirs may serve for a check to the unnecessary exercise of authority; and may sustain the opinion, that there being retained, in profession, the essentials of christian verity; and, in practice, the degree of submission to public will necessary to social worship; much of what is made the subject of ecclesiastical law, may be safely left to the diversity of sentiment which is the result of differ-

ence of intelligence, of education, and of constitutional character. But, as in an army, combination of force is found to excite their courage for an enterprize, more hazardous to every one engaged in it than a danger from which he would shrink in his individual character; so, in a representative body, a member of it is prone to calculate on a degree of submission, beyond what he would have imagined in the capacity of a sole legislator, although clothed with authority greater than that in the other case supposed.

In the estimation of discreet persons generally, ecclesiastical legislation is thought to have been carried too far. What the author sees cause to lament, is, that many who acknowledge this fact, and who are ready to lay unsparing hands on matters formerly established, would bind on the church something new and needless, and likely to excite diversity of opinion. They will do this with good intentions, and without being aware of the inconsistency. In a church having the secular arm for its support, what has been mentioned would be an evil: but it must be ruinous, if it should be dominant in a church so much acted on as ours by opinion of persons of all degrees in life, under an organization as it were of yesterday, and therefore not having the support of habitual submission to its decisions. In these circumstances, independently on other considerations, there is a call to the acquiring of a weight of religious character, not only in the episcopacy, but in the other clergy, and in the lay gentlemen, to whom may be committed the important work of making changes in ecclesiastical in-

stitutions. Even with the advantage of such a character, let them be aware of the truth of the maxim, that one property of the art of governing, is the taking of care not to govern too much.*

6thly. The last contemplated improvement, is the suggesting of the hope, that the time which has been spent, and the cares and the labours which have been bestowed, by some who have gone to their rest from their labours, and by others who have still on their hands a part of their work to be performed, will be applied to the proper end—the promoting of truth and godliness. In every age of the world, there is open a wide field for exertions to this effect; but the remark applies especially to the present period, in which there have occurred extraordinary and successful exertions, for the propagation of the gospel:

* During the convention of 1789, and while they were engaged in the review of the book of Common Prayer, a lady of excellent understanding, being often in the way of hearing the subject discussed by some members of the body, addressed them to the following effect—" When I hear these things, I look back to the origin of the prayer book: and I represent to my mind the venerable compilers of it, ascending to heaven in the flames which consumed their bodies. I then look at the improvers of this book in"—(naming some gentlemen not wanting in respectability, but very little furnished with theological knowledge.) " The consequence is, gentlemen, that I am not sanguine in my expectations of respect to be paid to your meditated changes in the liturgy." Without raising any question concerning the logic of this speech, can there be a doubt with those who know human nature, that something like it is the language of many a heart in the religious world, on the introduction of any novelty of which the propriety may be doubtful?

partly produced by formidable combinations for the destruction of it; which have been overruled to events in contrariety to the licentious principles taught, and to the disorders which they were intended to perpetuate. Doubtless, we are to ascribe the issue to the good providence of God, who, in a variety of ways, "makes the wrath of man to praise him." In America, which lays open immense countries to future population and culture, the incitement applies with extraordinary stress of argument: and while it should prompt all the members of this church to put forth their best endeavours, each man in his sphere, and according to his ability; it admonishes him, to be himself in the consistent profession, in the practice of the duties, and in possession of the consolations of the gospel: without which, he is not likely to be influential over others; and if this should happen, his lamp will be without the oil, which is necessary to prepare him for the reception of the spiritual bridegroom.

3. AN APPENDIX

OF ORIGINAL PAPERS.

No. 1. p. 61.

Communication with the court of Denmark.

Copy of a letter from John Adams Esq., to the president of congress, dated, the Hague, April 22, 1784.

SIR,

I received, sometime since, a letter from an American gentleman now in London, a candidate for orders, desiring to know, if American candidates might have orders from protestant bishops on the continent, and complaining that he had been refused by the bishop of London, unless he would take the oaths of allegiance, &c.

Meeting soon afterwards the Danish minister, I had the curiosity to inquire of him, whether ordination might be had in Denmark. He answered me, that he knew not, but would soon inform himself. I heard no more of it until to day, when the secretary of his embassy, Mr. De Rosencrantz made me a visit and delivered me the papers, copies of which are enclosed.

Thus, it seems, that what I meant as current conversation only, has been made the subject of the deliberation of the government of Denmark and their

faculty of theology; which makes it necessary for me to transmit it to congress.

I am happy to find the decision so liberal.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed.) J. ADAMS.

Translation of a communication of Mr. de St. Saphorin, to Mr. John Adams, dated, the Hague, April, 21, 1784.

Mr. de St. Saphorin, has the honour to communicate to Mr. Adams the answer he has received from his excellency the count de Rosencrone, privy counsellor and secretary of state for foreign affairs of his Danish majesty, relative to what Mr. Adams desired to know. He shall be happy if this answer should be agreeable to him, as well as to his superiors and useful to his fellow-citizens. He has the honour to assure him of his respect.

(Signed, &c.)

Translation of the copy of an extract of a letter from his excellency the count de Rosencrone, privy counsellor of his majesty the king of Denmark, to Mr. de St. Saphorin, envoy extraordinary from his majesty to the states general.

The opinion of the theological faculty having been taken on the question made to your excellency by Mr. Adams, if the American ministers of the church of England, can be consecrated here by a bishop of the Danish church? I am ordered by the king to authorise you to answer, that such an act can take place according to the Danish rites, but for

the convenience of the Americans who are supposed not to know the Danish language, the Latin language will be made use of on the occasion; for the rest, nothing will be exacted from the candidates, but a profession conformable to the articles of the English church, omitting the oath called test, which prevents their being ordained by the English bishops.

Secretary's Office, 6th April, 1785.

Sir,

Copies of the enclosed letters from Mr. John Adams, and Mr. de St. Saphorin, upon the subject of conferring holy orders agreeably to the principles of the church of England, were this day received by council; who have been pleased to direct that they should be communicated to you.

I must beg that they be returned to this office, as soon as you may find it convenient, and am,

Sir, with the greatest respect,
Your most obedient
Humble servant,
(Signed) J. Armstrong, Jr.

Rev. Dr. Wm. White.

Answer.

Sir,

I request you to present to the honourable council, my grateful sentiments of their polite attention to the interests of the episcopal church, in your communication of this morning.

Their condescension will be an apology for my troubling them with the perusal of an act of the British parliament, having the same operation with the libe-

ral and brotherly proceeding of the Danish government and clergy. And the liberty I have taken may hereafter exempt some of my brethren, from the suspicion of having entered into obligations inconsistent with their duty to their country.

But, sir, it would be injustice to the episcopal church, were I to neglect to inform the honourable board, that I take it to be a general sentiment, not to depend on any foreign authority for the ordination of ministers, or for any other matter appertaining to religion. As the light in which we shall hereafter be viewed by our fellow-citizens must depend on an adherence to the above mentioned principle; I take the liberty to submit to the honourable council two printed accounts of proceedings held in this city and in New York.

With my most dutiful thanks to the honourable board, and with all due submission, I am, sir,

Their and your very humble servant,

WM. WHITE.

April 6, 1785.

J. Armstrong, Esq.

No. 2. Page 64.

Communication of the clergy of Connecticut, to the archbishop of York.

New York, April 21, 1783.

MY LORD,

The clergy of Connecticut, deeply impressed with anxious apprehension of what may be the fate of the church in America, under the present changes of empire and policy, beg leave to embrace the ear-

liest moment in their power to address your grace on that important subject.

This part of America is at length dismembered from the British empire; but, notwithstanding the dissolution of our *civil* connexion with the parent state, we still hope to retain the *religious polity;* the primitive and evangelical doctrine and discipline, which, at the reformation, were restored and established in the church of England. To render that polity complete, and to provide for its perpetuity in this country, by the establishment of an *American Episcopate*, has long been an object of anxious concern to us, and to many of our brethren in other parts of this continent. The attainment of this object appears to have been hitherto obstructed by considerations of a political nature, which we conceive were founded in groundless jealousies and misapprehensions that can no longer be supposed to exist: and therefore, whatever may be the effect of independency on this country, in other respects, we presume it will be allowed to open a door for renewing an application to the spiritual governors of the church on this head; an application which we consider as not only seasonable, but more than ever necessary at this time; because if it be now any longer neglected, there is reason to apprehend that a plan of a very extraordinary nature, lately formed and published in Philadelphia, may be carried into execution. This plan is, in brief, to constitute a nominal episcopate by the united suffrages of presbyters and laymen. The peculiar situation of the episcopal churches in America, and the necessity of adopting

some speedy remedy for the want of a regular episcopate, are offered, in the publication here alluded to, as reasons fully sufficient to justify the scheme. Whatever influence this project may have on the minds of the ignorant or unprincipled part of the laity, or however it may, possibly, be countenanced by some of the clergy in other parts of the country; *we* think it our duty to reject such a spurious substitute for episcopacy, and, as far as may be in our power, to prevent its taking effect.

To lay the foundation, therefore, for a valid and regular episcopate in America, we earnestly entreat your grace, that, in your Archi-episcopal character, you will espouse the cause of our sinking church; and, at this important crisis, afford her that relief on which her very existence depends, by consecrating a bishop for Connecticut. The person, whom we have prevailed upon to offer himself to your grace for that purpose, is the reverend doctor *Samuel Seabury*, who has been the society's worthy missionary for many years. He was born and educated in Connecticut—he is personally known to us—and we believe him to be every way qualified for the episcopal office, and for the discharge of those duties peculiar to it, in the present trying and dangerous times.

All the weighty considerations which concur to enforce our request, are well known to your grace: we therefore forbear to enlarge, lest we should seem to distrust your grace's zeal in a cause of such acknowledged importance to the interests of religion. Suffer us then to rest in humble confidence that your grace will hear and grant our petition, and give us

the consolation of receiving, through a clear and uninterrupted channel, an overseer in this part of the household of God.

That God may continue your life and health, make you in his providence an eminent instrument of great and extensive usefulness to mankind in general, a lasting blessing to the church over which you preside in particular; and that the present and future sons of the church in America may have cause to record and perpetuate your name as their friend and spiritual father,—and, when your sacred work is ended, that you may find it gloriously rewarded, is and shall be the devout prayer of the clergy of Connecticut, by whose order (in convention assembled) and in whose behalf this letter is addressed to your grace by your grace's most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed) ABRAHAM JARVIS,
Minister of the Episcopal church in Middletown, and secretary to the Convention.

Testimonial.

Whereas our well beloved in Christ, Samuel Seabury, doctor of divinity, and missionary of Staten-Island in this province, is about to embark for England, at the earnest request of the episcopal clergy of Connecticut, and for the purpose of presenting himself a candidate for the sacred office of a bishop; and that when consecrated and admitted to the said office, he may return to Connecticut, and there exercise the spiritual powers, and discharge the duties which are peculiar to the episcopal character, among

the members of the church of England, by superintending the clergy, ordaining candidates for holy orders, and confirming such of the laity as may chuse to be confirmed—We the subscribers, desirous to testify our hearty concurrence in this measure, and promote its success; as well as to declare the high opinion we justly entertain of doctor Seabury's learning, abilities, prudence and zeal for religion, do hereby certify, that we have been personally and intimately acquainted with the said doctor Seabury for many years past—that we believe him to be every way qualified for the sacred office of a bishop; the several duties of which office, we are firmly persuaded, he will discharge with honour, dignity and fidelity, and consequently with advantage to the church of God.

And we cannot forbear to express our most earnest wish that doctor Seabury may succeed in this application, as it will be the means of preserving the church of England in America from ruin, and of preventing many irregularities which we see approaching, and which, if once introduced, no after care may be able to remove.

Given under our hands, at New York, this twenty-first day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three.

JEREMIAH LEAMING, D.D.
CHARLES INGLIS, D D.
Rector of Trinity church, New York.
BENJAMIN MOORE, D.D.
Assistant minister of Trinity church, New York, and others.

Letter to the archbishop of York.

New York, May 24, 1783.

My Lord,

The reverend doctor Samuel Seabury will have the honour of presenting this letter to your grace. He goes to England, at the request of the episcopal clergy of Connecticut, on business highly interesting and important. They have written on the subject to your grace, and also to the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London. But, as they were pleased to consult us on the occasion, and to submit what they had written to our inspection, requesting our concurrence in their application, their letters are dated at New York, and signed only by the Rev. Mr. Jarvis, the secretary to their convention, whom they commissioned and sent here for that purpose.

The measure proposed, on this occasion, by our brethren of Connecticut, could not fail to have our hearty concurrence. For we are decidedly of opinion, that no other means can be devised to preserve the existence of the episcopal church in this country. We have therefore joined with Mr. Jarvis in giving doctor Seabury a testimonial, in which we have briefly, but sincerely, expressed our sense of his merit, and our earnest wishes for the success of his undertaking.

Should he succeed and be consecrated, he means (with the approbation of the society) to return in the character, and perform the duties of a missionary,

at New-London in Connecticut; and on his arrival in that country, to make application to the governor, in hope of being cheerfully permitted to exercise the spiritual powers of his episcopal office there; in which, we are persuaded, he will meet with little, if any opposition. For many persons of character in Connecticut, and elsewhere, who are not members of the episcopal church, have lately declared they have no longer any objection to an American episcopate, now that the independency of this country, acknowledged by Great Britain, has removed their apprehensions of the bishops being invested with a share of temporal power by the British government.

We flatter ourselves that any impediments to the consecration of a bishop for America, arising from the peculiar constitution of the church of England, may be removed by the king's royal permission; and we cannot entertain a doubt of his majesty's readiness to grant it.

In humble confidence that your grace will consider the object of this application as a measure worthy of your zealous patronage, we beg leave to remind your grace, that several legacies have been, at different times, bequeathed for the support of bishops in America, and to express our hopes that some part of those legacies, or of the interest arising from them, may be appropriated to the maintenance of doctor Seabury, in case he is consecrated, and settles in America. We conceive that the separation of this country from the parent state, can be no rea-

sonable bar to such appropriation, nor invalidate the title of American bishops, who derive their consecration from the church of England, to the benefit of those legacies. And perhaps, this charitable assistance is now more necessary, than it would have been, had not the empire been dismembered.

We take this opportunity to inform your grace, that we have consulted his excellency, sir Guy Carleton, on the subject of procuring the appointment of a bishop for the province of Nova Scotia, on which he has expressed to us his entire approbation, and has written to administration, warmly recommending the measure. We took the liberty, at the same time, of mentioning our worthy brother, the Rev. Dr. Thomas B. Chandler, to his excellency, as a person every way qualified to discharge the duties of the episcopal office in that province, with dignity and honour. And we hope for your grace's approbation of what we have done in that matter, and for the concurrence of your influence with sir Guy Carleton's recommendation in promoting the design.

We should have given this information sooner to your grace, but that we waited for doctor Seabury's departure for England, which we considered as affording the best, and most proper conveyance.

If doctor Chandler and doctor Seabury should both succeed, as we pray God they may, we trust that, with the blessing of Heaven, the episcopal church will yet flourish in this western hemisphere.

With the warmest sentiments of respect and esteem, we have the honour to be,

My lord,

your grace's most dutiful sons,

and obedient, humble servants.

JEREMIAH LEAMING, D.D.

CHARLES INGLIS, D.D.

Rector of Trinity church, New York.

BENJAMIN MOORE, D.D.

Assistant Minister of Trinity church, New York, and others.

His grace the archbishop of York.

No. 3. Page 85.

A letter from the Rev. Abraham Jarvis, in the name of the clergy of Connecticut.

REVEREND SIR,

We the clergy of Connecticut, met at Woodbury in voluntary convention, beg leave to acquaint you, that a small pamphlet printed in Philadelphia has been transmitted to us, of which you are said to be the author. This pamphlet proposes a new form of government in the episcopal church, and points at the method of erecting it. As the thirteen states have now risen to independent sovereignty, we agree with you, sir, that the chain which connected this with the mother church is broken; that the American church is now left to stand in its own strength—and that some change in its regulations must in due time take place. But we think it premature and of dangerous consequence, to enter upon so capital a

business, till we have resident bishops (if they can be obtained) to assist in the performance of it, and to form a new union in the American church, under proper superiors, since its union is now broken with such superiors in the British church. We shall only advert to such things in the pamphlet, as we esteem of dangerous consequence. You say the conduct you mean to recommend, is to include in the proposed frame of government a general approbation of episcopacy, and a declaration of an intention to procure the succession as soon as conveniently may be; but in the mean time to carry the plan into effect, without waiting for the succession. But why do you include a general approbation of episcopacy, in your proposed new frame of government? not because you think bishops a constituent part of an episcopal church, unless you conceive they derive their office and existence from the king's authority; for though you acknowledge we cannot at present have bishops here, and propose to set up without them, yet you say no constitutional principle of our church is changed by the revolution, but what was founded on the authority of the king. Your motives for the above general approbation, seem indeed to be purely political. One is, that the general opinion of episcopalians is in favour of bishops, and therefore, (if we understand your reasoning) it would be impolitic, not to flatter them with the hopes of it. Another reason is, that too wide a deviation from the British church might induce future emigrants from thence, to set up independent churches here. But could

you have proposed to set up the ministry, without waiting for the succession, had you believed the episcopal superiority to be an ordinance of Christ, with the exclusive authority of ordination and government, and that it has ever been so esteemed in the purest ages of the church? and yet we conceive this to be the sense of episcopalians in general, and warranted by the constant practice of the christian church. Really, sir, we think an episcopal church without episcopacy, if it be not a contradiction in terms, would, however, be a new thing under the sun; and yet the episcopal church, by the pamphlet proposed to be erected, must be in this predicament till the succession be obtained. You plead necessity, however, and argue that the best writers in the church admit of presbyterian ordination, where episcopal cannot be had. To prove this, you quote concessions from the venerable Hooker and Dr. Chandler, which their exuberant charity to the reformed churches abroad, led them to make. But the very words you quote from the last mentioned gentleman prove his opinion to be, that bishops were as truly an ordinance of Christ, and as essential to his church as the sacraments; for, say you, he insists upon it (meaning the episcopal superiority,) as of divine right, asserts that the laws relating to it bind as strongly as the laws which relate to baptism and the holy eucharist, and that if the succession be once broken, not all the men on earth, not all the angels in heaven, without an immediate commission from Christ, can restore it—but you say, he does not, however.

hold this succession to be necessary, only where it can be had. Neither does he or the christian church, hold the sacraments to be necessary, where they cannot be had agreeable to the appointment of the great head of the church. Why should particular acts of authority be thought more necessary than the authority itself? why should the sacraments be more essential than that authority Christ has ordained to administer them? It is true that Christ has appointed the sacraments, and it is as true that he hath appointed officers to administer them, and has expressly forbid any to do it but those who are authorized by his appointment, or called of God as was Aaron. And yet these gentlemen (without any inconsistency with their declared sentiments) have, and all good men will express their charitable hopes that God in compassion to a well meant zeal, will add the same blessings to those who, through unavoidable mistake, act beside his commission, as if they really had it. As far as we can find, it has been the constant opinion of our church in England and here, that the episcopal superiority is an ordinance of Christ, and we think that the uniform practice of the whole American church for near a century, sending their candidates three thousand miles for holy orders, is more than a presumptive proof that the church here are and ever have been of this opinion. The sectaries, soon after the reformation, declared that the book of consecration, &c., was superstitious and contrary to God's word, and the moderation you mention in the articles and canons, consists in affirming that this

declaration was entirely false; and would you wish to be more severe? The instances you adduce, wherein presbyterian ordination has been tolerated in the church, have, by its best writers, been set in such a point of view as to give no countenance to your scheme, and the authorities you quote have been answered again and again. If you will not allow this superiority to have an higher origin than the Apostles, yet since they were divinely inspired, we see not why their practice is not equal to a divine warrant, and as they have given no liberty to deviate from their practice in any exigence of the church, we know not what authority we have to take such liberties in any case. However, we think nothing can be more clear, than that our church has ever believed bishops to have the sole right of ordination and government, and that this regimen was appointed of Christ himself, and it is now, to use your own words, humbly submitted to consideration, whether such episcopalians as consent even to a temporary departure, and set aside this ordinance of Christ for conveniency, can scarcely deserve the name of Christians. But would necessity warrant a deviation from the law of Christ, and the immemorial practice of the church, yet what necessity have we to plead? Can we plead necessity with any propriety, till we have tried to obtain an episcopate, and have been rejected? We conceive the present to be a more favourable opportunity for the introduction of bishops, than this country has before seen. However dangerous bishops formerly might have been thought to

the civil rights of these states, this danger has now vanished, for such superiors will have no civil authority. They will be purely ecclesiastics. The states have now risen to sovereign authority, and bishops will be equally under the control of civil law with other clergymen; no danger, then, can now be feared from bishops, but such as may be feared from presbyters. This being the case, have we not the highest reason to hope, that the whole civil authority upon the continent, (should their assistance be needed) will unite their influence with the church, to procure an office so essential to it, and to render complete a profession, which contains so considerable a proportion of its inhabitants. And on the other hand, is there any reason to believe, that all the bishops in England, and in all the other reformed churches in Europe, are so totally lost to a sense of their duty, and to the real wants of their brethren in the episcopal church here, as to refuse to ordain bishops to preside over us, when a proper application shall be made to them for it? If this cannot be, why is not the present a favourable opportunity for such an application? Nothing is further from the design of this letter than to begin a dispute with you; but in a frank and brotherly way to express our opinion of the mistaken and dangerous tendency of the pamphlet. We fear, should the scheme of it be carried into execution in the southern states, it will create divisions in the church at a time, when its whole strength depends upon its unity: for we know it is totally abhorrent from the principles of the church in the northern states, and

are fully convinced they will never submit to it. And indeed should we consent to a temporary departure from episcopacy, there would be very little propriety in asking for it afterwards, and as little reason ever to expect it in America. Let us all then unite as one man to improve this favourable opportunity, to procure an object so desirable and so essential to the church.

We are, dear sir, your affectionate brethren, the clergy of Connecticut.

Signed by order of the convention,

ABRAHAM JARVIS, Sect'y.

Rev. Mr. White.

Woodbury, March 25, 1783.

No. 4. Page 99.

A letter of the Rt. Rev. bishop Seabury, to the Rev. Dr. Smith.

August 15, 1785.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

It has not been in my power till this day, to pay that attention to your letter of July 19, which the importance of its several subjects demanded. The grand difficulty that defeated my application for consecration in England, appeared to me to be the want of an application from the state of Connecticut. Other objections are made, viz., that there was no precise diocess marked out by the civil authority, nor a stated revenue appointed for the bishop's support: but these were removed. The other remained, for the civil authority in Connecticut is presbyterian,

and therefore could not be supposed would petition for a bishop: and had this been removed, I am not sure that another would not have started up: for this happened several times. I waited and procured a copy of an act of the legislature of Connecticut, which puts all denominations of Christians on a footing of equality, except the Roman Catholics, and to them it gives a free toleration, certified by the secretary of the state: for to Connecticut all my negotiations were confined. The archbishop of Canterbury wished it had been fuller, but thought it afforded ground on which to proceed, yet he afterwards said it would not do; and that the minister, without a formal requisition from the state, would not suffer the bill, enabling the bishop of London to ordain foreign candidates without their taking the oaths, to pass the commons, if it contained a clause for consecrating American bishops. And as his grace did not choose to proceed without parliamentary authority, though if I understood him right, a majority of the judges and crown lawyers, were of opinion he might safely do it. I turned my attention to the remains of the old Scots episcopal church, whose consecration I knew was derived from England, and their authority in an ecclesiastical sense, fully equal to the English bishops. No objection was ever made to me on account of the legacies left for American bishops: some people had surmises of this kind, but I know not whence they arose.

I can see no good ground of apprehension concerning the titles of estates, or emoluments belonging

to the church in your state: your church is still the church of England, subsisting under a different civil government. We have in America the church of Holland, of Scotland, of Sweden, of Moravia, and why not of England? Our being of the church of England, no more implies dependence on or subjection to England, than being of the church of Holland implies subjection to Holland. The plea of the Methodists is something like impudence. Mr. Wesley is only a presbyter, and all his ordinations presbyterian, and in direct opposition to the church of England. And they can have no pretence for calling themselves churchmen, till they return to the unity of the church, which they have unreasonably, unnecessarily and wickedly broken, by their separation and schism.

Your two cautions, respecting recommendations and titles, are certainly just. Till you are so happy as to have a bishop of your own, it will be a pleasure to me to do any thing I can, for the supply of your churches. And I am confident the clergy of Maryland and the other states, will be very particular with regard to the qualifications and titles of persons to be admitted into their own order. Should they think proper to send any candidates hither, I would wish that it might be at the stated times of ordination; because the clergy here being so scattered, it is not easy on every emergency to get three of them together; and never without some expense, which they cannot well afford. I cannot omit to mention again the particular satisfaction Mr. Ferguson gave,

not only to me, but to all our clergy. I hope he will prove a worthy and useful clergyman. I flatter myself he got home without any disagreeable accident.

I thank you for your communication respecting Washington college, and the various conventions you have had in your state and neighbourhood. The clergy and laity have particular merit in making so great exertions, to get our church into a settled and respectable state. But on subjects of such magnitude and variety, it is to be expected that sentiments will differ. All men do not always see the same object in the same light: and persons at a distance are not always masters of the precise reasons and circumstances, which have occasioned particular modes of acting. Of some things therefore in your proceedings I cannot be a competent judge, without minute information; and I am very sorry that my present circumstances and duty here, will not permit me to make so long a journey at this time; because by personal interview and conversation only, can such information be had.

But, my dear sir, there are some things which, if I do not much misapprehend, are really wrong. In giving my opinion of them, I must claim the same privilege of judging for myself which others claim, and also that right of fair and candid interpretation of my sentiments which is due to all men.

1. I think you have done wrong in establishing so many and so precise fundamental rules. You seem hereby to have precluded yourselves from the benefit of after consideration. And by having the

power of altering fundamental laws diffused through so large a body, it appears to me next to impossible to have them altered, even in some reasonable cases; because cases really reasonable may not appear so to two thirds of so large an assembly. It should also be remembered, that while human nature is as it is, something of party passion or partiality will ever be apt, in some degree, to influence the views and debates of a numerous and mixed assembly.

2. I think you have too much circumscribed the power of your bishops. *That the duty and office of a bishop differs in nothing from that of other priests, except in the power of ordination and confirmation,* (*Pamph.* p. 16.) is a position that carries Jerom's opinion to the highest pitch. *Quid facit episcopus quod presbyter non faciat, excepta ordinatione?* But it does not appear that Jerom had the support of the church in this opinion, but rather the contrary. Government as essentially pertains to bishops as ordination; nay ordination is but the particular exercise of government. Whatever share of government presbyters have in the church, they have from the bishop, and must exercise it in conjunction with or in subordination to him. And though a congregation may have a right, and I am willing to allow it, to choose their minister, as they are to support him and live under his ministry, yet the bishop's concurrence or license is necessary, because they are part of his charge; has the care of their souls; and therefore the minister's authority to take charge of that congregation must come through the bishop.

The choice of the bishop is in the presbyters; but the neighbouring bishops who are to consecrate him must have the right of judging whether he be a proper person or not. The presbyters are the bishop's council, with whom he ought to do nothing but matters of course. The presbyters have always a check upon their bishop; because they can, neither bishop nor presbyters, do any thing beyond the common course of duty, without each other. I mean with regard to a particular diocess; for it does not appear that presbyters had any seat in general councils, but by particular indulgence.

The people, being the patrons of the churches in this country and having the means of the bishop's and minister's support in their hands, have a sufficient restraint upon them. In cases that require it, they can apply to their bishop, who, with the assistance of his presbyters, will proceed, as the case may require, to censure, suspension, or deposition of the offending clergyman. If a bishop behaves amiss, the neighbouring bishops are his judges. Men that are not to be trusted with these powers are not fit to be bishops or presbyters at all.

This, I take it, is the constitution of the christian church, in its pure and simple state. And it is a constitution which, if adhered to, will carry itself into good effect. This constitution we have adopted in Connecticut; and we do hope and trust that we shall, by God's grace, exhibit to the world, in our government, discipline and order, a pure and perfect model of primitive simplicity.

Presbyters cannot be too careful in choosing their bishop; nor the people in choosing their minister. Improper men may, however, sometimes succeed; and so they will, make exact rules as you can and circumscribe their power as you can. And an improper man in the chuch is an improper man, however he came there, and however his power be limited. The more you circumscribe him, the greater temptation he is under to form a party to support him; and when his party is formed, all the power of your convention will not be able to displace him. In short, if you get a bad man, your laws and regulations will not be effectual; if a good man, the general laws of the church are sufficient.

Where civil states have made provision for ministers, it seems reasonable that they should define the qualifications and regulate the conduct of those who are to enjoy the emoluments. But voluntary associations for the exercise of such powers as your convention is to have, are always apt, such is the infirmity of human nature, to fall into parties; and when party enters, animosity and discord soon follow. From what has been said, you will suppose I shall object,

3. To the admission of lay members into synods, &c. I have as great a regard for the laity as any man can have. It is for their sake that ministers are appointed in the church. I have no idea of aggrandizing the clergy at the expense of the laity; nor indeed of aggrandizing them at all. Decent means of living is all they have a right to expect. But I cannot

conceive that the laity can, with any propriety, be admitted to sit in judgment on bishops and presbyters; especially when deposition may be the event; because they cannot take away a character which they cannot confer. It is incongruous to every idea of episcopal government. That authority which confers power, can, for proper reasons, take it away. But where there is no authority to confer power, there can be none to disannul it. Wherever therefore the power of ordination is lodged, the power of deprivation is lodged also.

Should it be thought necessary that the laity should have a share in the choice of their bishop, if it can be put on a proper footing, so as to avoid party and confusion, I see not but that it might be admitted. But I do not apprehend that this was the practice of the primitive church. In short, the rights of the Christian church arise not from nature or compact, but from the institution of Christ; and we ought not to alter them, but to receive and maintain them as the holy Apostles left them. The government, sacraments, faith and doctrine of the church, are fixed and settled. We have a right to examine *what they are*, but we must take them *as they are*. If we new model the government, why not the sacraments, creeds and doctrines of the church? But then it would not be Christ's church, but *our* church, and would remain so, call it by what name we please.

I do therefore beseech the clergy and laity, who shall meet at Philadelphia, to re-consider the matter,

before a final step be taken: and to endeavour to bring their church government as near to the primitive pattern as may be. They will find it the simplest and most easy to carry into effect; and if it be adhered to, will be in no danger of sinking or failing.

I do not think it necessary that the church, in every state, should be just as the church in Connecticut is; though I think that the best model. Particular circumstances, I know, will call for particular considerations. But in so essential a matter as church government is, no alteration should be made to affect its foundation. If a man be called a bishop who has not the episcopal power of government, he is called by a wrong name, even though he should have the power of ordination and confirmation.

Let me therefore again entreat, that such material alterations, and forgive me if I say unjustifiable ones, may not be made in the government of the Church. I have written freely as becomes an honest man; and in a case which I think calls for freedom of sentiment and expression. I wish not to give offence, and I hope none will be taken. Whatever I can do consistently to assist in procuring bishops in America, I shall do cheerfully, but beyond that I cannot go; and I am sure neither you, nor any of the friends of the Church, would wish I should.

If any expression in this letter should seem too warm, I will be ready to correct the mode, but the sentiments I must retain till I find them wrong, and then I will freely give them up. In this matter I am not interested; my ground is taken, and I wish not to

extend my authority beyond its proper limits. But I do most earnestly wishto have our churches in all the states so settled, that it may be one church united in government, doctrine, and discipline—that there may be no division among us—no opposition of interests—no clashing of opinions. And permit me to hope that you will, at your approaching convention, so far recede in the points I have mentioned, as to make this practicable. Your convention will be large and very much to be respected. Its determinations will influence many of the American states, and posterity will be materially affected by them.

These considerations are so many arguments for calm and cool deliberation. Human passions and prejudices, and if possible, infirmities, should be laid aside. A wrong step will be attended with dreadful consequences. Patience and prudence must be exercised. And should there be some circumstances that press hard for a remedy, hasty decisions will not mend them. In doubtful cases they will probably have a bad effect.

May the spirit of God be with you at Philadelphia, and as I persuade myself the sole good of his church is the sole aim of you all, I hope for the best effects from your meeting.

I send you the alterations which it has been here thought proper to make in the liturgy, to accommodate it to the civil constitution of this state. You will observe, that there is no collect for the congress. We have no backwardness in that respect, but thought it our duty to know whether the civil authority in

this state has any directions to give in that matter; and that cannot be known till their next meeting in October.

Some other alterations were proposed, of which Mr. Ferguson took a copy; and I would send you a copy had I time to transcribe it.

The matter will be resumed at N. Haven the 11th of September. Should we come to any determination, the brethren to the southward shall be informed of it.

With my best regards to the convention and to you, I remain your affectionate humble servant,

(Signed.) SAMUEL.

Bishop of the Episcopal church in Connecticut.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a copy of my letters of consecration, which you will please to communicate to the convention; you will also perceive it to be my wish that this letter should be communicated to them; to which, I presume, there can be no objection.

No. 5. p. 101.

Address of the Convention of 1785, to the English Prelates.

To the Most Reverend and Right Reverend the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishops of the Church of England.

We, the clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in sundry of the United States of America, think it our duty to address your lordships on a subject deeply interesting, not only to ourselves

and those whom we represent, but, as we conceive, to the common cause of christianity.

Our forefathers, when they left the land of their nativity, did not leave the bosom of that church, over which your lordships now preside; but, as well from a veneration for Episcopal government, as from an attachment to the admirable services of our liturgy, continued in willing connection with their Ecclesiastical superiors in England, and were subjected to many local inconveniencies, rather than break the unity of the church to which they belonged.

When it pleased the Supreme Ruler of the universe, that this part of the British empire should be free, sovereign and independent, it became the most important concern of the members of our communion to provide for its continuance. And while, in accomplishing this, they kept in view that wise and liberal part of the system of the church of England, which excludes as well the claiming as the acknowledging of such spiritual subjection as may be inconsistent with the civil duties of her children; it was nevertheless their earnest desire and resolution to retain the venerable form of episcopal government, handed down to them, as they conceived, from the time of the apostles: and endeared to them by the remembrance of the holy bishops of the primitive church, of the blessed martyrs who reformed the doctrine and worship of the church of England, and of the many great and pious prelates who have adorned that church in every succeeding age. But however general the desire of completing the orders of our ministry, so diffused and unconnected were the members of our

communion over this extensive country, that much time and negotiation were necessary for the forming of a representative body of the greater number of the episcopalians in these States; and owing to the same causes, it was not until this convention, that sufficient powers could be procured for the addressing of your lordships on this subject.

The petition which we offer to your venerable body, is--that from a tender regard to the religious interests of thousands in this rising empire, professing the same religious principles with the church of England, you will be pleased to confer the episcopal character on such persons as shall be recommended by this church in the several States here represented: full satisfaction being given of the sufficiency of the persons recommended, and of its being the intention of the general body of the episcopalians in the said States respectively, to receive them in the quality of bishops.

Whether this our request will meet with insurmountable impediments, from the political regulations of the kingdom in which your lordships fill such distinguished stations, it is not for us to foresee. We have not ascertained, that any such will exist; and are humbly of opinion, that as citizens of these States, interested in their prosperity, and religiously regarding the allegiance which we owe them, it is to an ecclesiastical source only, we can apply in the present exigency.

It may be of consequence to observe, that in these states there is a separation between the concerns of policy, and those of religion; that accordingly, our

civil rulers cannot officially join in the present application; that, however, we are far from apprehending the opposition or even displeasure of any of those honorable personages; and finally, that in this business we are justified by the constitutions of the states, which are the foundations and control of all our laws. On this point, we beg leave to refer to the enclosed extracts from the constitutions of the respective states of which we are citizens, and we flatter ourselves that they must be satisfactory.

Thus, we have stated to your lordships the nature and the grounds of our application; which we have thought it most respectful and most suitable to the magnitude of the object, to address to your lordships for your deliberation, before any person is sent over to carry them into effect. Whatever may be the event, no time will efface the remembrance of the past services of your lordships and your predecessors. The archbishops of Canterbury were not prevented, even by the weighty concerns of their high stations, from attending to the interests of this distant branch of the church under their care. The bishops of London were our diocesans: and the uninterrupted, although voluntary submission of our congregations, will remain a perpetual proof of their mild and paternal government. All the bishops of England, with other distinguished characters, as well ecclesiastical as civil, have concurred in forming and carrying on the benevolent views of the society for propagating the gospel in foreign parts; a society to whom, under God, the prosperity of our church is in an eminent degree to be ascribed. It is our earnest wish to be permitted

to make, through your lordships, this just acknowledgment to that venerable society; a tribute of gratitude which we the rather take this opportunity of paying, as while they thought it necessary to withdraw their pecuniary assistance from our ministers, they have endeared their past favors by a benevolent declaration, that it is far from their thoughts to alienate their affection from their brethren now under another government; with the pious wish, that their former exertions may still continue to bring forth the fruits they aimed at of pure religion and virtue. Our hearts are penetrated with the most lively gratitude by these generous sentiments; the long succession of former benefits passes in review before us; we pray that our church may be a lasting monument of the usefulness of so worthy a body; and that her sons may never cease to be kindly affectioned to the members of that church, the fathers of which have so tenderly watched over her infancy.

For your lordships in particular, we most sincerely wish and pray, that you may long continue the ornaments of the church of England, and at last receive the reward of the righteous from the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

We are, with all the respect which is due to your exalted and venerable characters and stations,

Your Lordships

Most obedient, and

In Convention. Most humble servants,*

Christ Church, Philadelphia, October 5th, 1785.

* Signed by all the members.

The preceding address and consequent measures for obtaining the episcopacy, were contemplated by the following plan of the convention recorded on their journal. Ordered:

First, That this convention address the archbishops and bishops of the church of England, requesting them to confer the episcopal character on such persons as shall be chosen and recommended to them for that purpose, from the conventions of this church in the respective states.

Secondly, That it be recommended to the said conventions, that they elect persons for this purpose.

Thirdly, That it be further recommended to the different conventions, at their next respective sessions, to appoint committees, with powers to correspond with the English bishops for the carrying of these resolutions into effect; and that, until such committees shall be appointed, they be requested to direct any communications which they may be pleased to make on this subject to the committee, consisting of the Rev. Dr. White, president, the Rev. Dr. Smith, the Rev. Mr. Provoost, the honorable James Duane, esq. and Samuel Powell and Richard Peters, esquires.

Fourthly, That it be further recommended to the different conventions, that they pay especial attention to the making it appear to their lordships, that the persons who shall be sent to them for consecration are desired in the character of bishops, as well by the laity as by the clergy of this church, in the said states respectively; and that they will be received by them in that character on their return.

Fifthly, And in order to assure their lordships of the legality of the present proposed application, that the deputies now assembled be desired to make a respectful address to the civil rulers of the states in which they respectively reside, to certify that the said application is not contrary to the constitutions and laws of the same.

Sixthly, And whereas the bishops of this church will not be entitled to any of such temporal honors as are due to the archbishops and bishops of the parent church, in quality of lords of parliament; and whereas the reputation and usefulness of our bishops will considerably depend on their taking no higher titles or stile than will be due to their spiritual employments; that it be recommended to this church in the states here represented, to provide, that their respective bishops may be called "The Right Rev. *A. B.* bishop of the protestant episcopal church in *C. D.*" and as bishop may have no other title; and may not use any such stile as is usually descriptive of temporal power and precedency.

No. 6. Page 116.

Letter of the English prelates.

London, February 24, 1786.

To the clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in sundry of the United States of America.

The archbishop of Canterbury hath received an address, dated in convention, Christ church, Philadelphia, October 5, 1785, from the clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in sun-

dry of the United States of America, directed to the archbishops and bishops of England, and requesting them to confer the Episcopal character on such persons as shall be recommended by the Episcopal church in the several states by them represented.

This brotherly and christian address was communicated to the archbishop of York, and to the bishops, with as much despatch as their separate and distant situations would permit, and hath been received and considered by them with that true and affectionate regard which they have always shown towards their episcopal brethren in America.

We are now enabled to assure you, that nothing is nearer to our hearts than the wish to promote your spiritual welfare, to be instrumental in procuring for you the complete exercise of our holy religion, and the enjoyment of that ecclesiastical constitution, which we believe to be truly apostolical, and for which you express so unreserved a veneration.

We are therefore happy to be informed, that this pious design is not likely to receive any discountenance from the civil powers under which you live; and we desire you to be persuaded, that we, on our parts, will use our best endeavours, which we have good reason to hope will be successful, to acquire a legal capacity of complying with the prayer of your address.

With these sentiments we are disposed to make every allowance which candour can suggest for the difficulties of your situation, but at the same time we cannot help being afraid, that, in the proceedings of your convention, some alterations may have been

adopted or intended, which those difficulties do not seem to justify.

Those alterations are not mentioned in your address, and, as our knowledge of them is no more than what has reached us through private and less certain channels, we hope you will think it just, both to you and to ourselves, if we wait for an explanation.

For while we are anxious to give every proof, not only of our brotherly affection, but of our facility in forwarding your wishes, we cannot but be extremely cautious, lest we should be the instruments of establishing an ecclesiastical system which will be called a branch of the church of England, but afterwards may possibly appear to have departed from it essentially, either in doctrine or in discipline.

In the mean time, we heartily commend you to God's holy protection, and are, your affectionate brethren,

J. Rochester,	T. Cantuar,
R. Worcester,	W. Ebor,
I. Oxford,	R. London,
I. Exeter,	W. Chichester,
Tho. Lincoln,	C. Bath & Wells,
John Bangor,	S. St. Asaph,
I. Lichfield & Coventry,	S. Sarum,
S. Gloucester,	J. Peterborough,
E. St. David's,	James Ely.
Chr. Bristol,	

To the reverend and honourable the clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in sundry of the United States of America, Philadelphia.

No. 7. 131.

A memorial from the convention in New-Jersey.

To the general convention of the Protestant Episcopal church of the United States of America, to be held in the City of Philadelphia in June next.

The memorial of the convention of the said church in New-Jersey, now held in the City of Perth Amboy, RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

That your memorialists have unanimously approved of the alterations in the liturgy as they appear in the new Prayer Book, to render it consistent with the American revolution and the constitutions of the respective states, as made and concluded on by the late general convention of said church held at Philadelphia, in September and October last; they being satisfactory and agreeable to their wish.

They have also approved of their plan for obtaining consecration of bishops; and pursuant to their recommendation have appointed a committee to correspond with the English bishops for that purpose.

They have also with great pleasure considered their address to the archbishops and bishops of the church of England; which your memorialists are of opinion was properly calculated to obtain the end proposed.

But it is with the greatest concern they are constrained to remark, that the other proceedings of the said convention, in their opinion, have an undoubted tendency to prolong, if not entirely prevent, the obtaining the prayer thereof. In this opinion your me-

morialists conceive they are supported by the answer of the said venerable bishops, with a copy of which they have been favoured during their sitting at this place; for which reason among others, they did not ratify, but disapproved of the other parts of the proceedings of the said late general convention.

Your memorialists do not question the right of every National or Independent Church to make such alterations from time to time, in the mode of its public worship, as upon mature consideration may be found expedient; but they doubt the right of any order or orders of men in an episcopal church, without a bishop, to make any alterations not warranted by immediate necessity; especially such, as not only go to the mode of its worship, but also to its doctrines. Wherefore your memorialists, cannot forbear remarking, that in their opinion, all unnecessary alterations must be unseasonable and impolitic, and will prove highly detrimental to the church in general.

Your memorialists cannot approve of the said late general convention having published in the manner they have, the new book of Common Prayer as altered, with the psalms and calendar transposed and changed by their committee, without their revision and express approbation; but since they have done so, and if it was proper to have been considered, your memorialists have to regret, that the same was not sooner published, that they might have been enabled to have declared the sentiments of their constituents as well as their own. The prejudices and

prepossessions of mankind in favour of old customs, especially in religious matters, are generally so strong as to require great delicacy and caution in the introduction of any alterations or innovations, although manifestly for the better; which was also one reason why they could not at this time ratify the alterations so unnecessarily made; and they are very apprehensive, that until alterations can be made consistent with the customs of the primitive church, and with the rules of the church of England from which it is our boast to have descended, a ratification of them would create great uneasiness in the minds of many members of the church, and in great probability cause dissentions and schisms. Although they may not disapprove of all the alterations made in the said new book, yet they have to regret the unseasonableness and irregularity of them.

Your memorialists having an anxious desire of cementing, perpetuating, and extending the Union so happily begun in the church; with all deference and submission, humbly request and intreat the said general convention, now soon to meet, that they will revise the proceedings of the said late convention and their aforesaid committee, and remove every cause that may have excited any jealously or fear, that the episcopal church in the United States of America have any intention or desire essentially to depart, either in doctrine or discipline, from the church of England; but on the contrary, to convince the world that it is their wish and intention, to maintain the doctrines of the gospel as now held by the church of England,

and to adhere to the liturgy of the said church as far as shall be consistent with the American Revolution, and the constitution of the respective states: thereby removing every obstacle in the way of obtaining the consecration of such and so many persons to the episcopal character as shall render our Ecclesiastical government complete, and secure to the episcopalians in America, and to their descendants, a succession of that necessary order: And that they will use all means in their power to promote and perpetuate harmony and unanimity among ourselves, and with the said church of England as a Mother or Sister church, and with every protestant church in the universe.

By order of the convention,

ABRM. BEACH, President.

Perth Amboy, May 19, 1786.

No. 8. Page 131.

Second address to the English prelates.

To the most reverend and right reverend fathers in God, the archbishops and bishops of the church of England.

MOST WORTHY AND VENERABLE PRELATES,

We, the clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina, have received the friendly and affectionate letter which your lordships did us the honour to write on the 24th day of February, and for

which we request you to accept our sincere and grateful acknowledgments.

It gives us pleasure to be assured, that the success of our application will probably meet with no greater obstacles than what have arisen from doubts respecting the extent of the alterations we have made and proposed; and we are happy to learn, that as no political impediments oppose us here, those which at present exist in England may be removed.

While doubts remain of our continuing to hold the same essential articles of faith and discipline with the church of England, we acknowledge the propriety of suspending a compliance with our request.

We are unanimous and explicit in assuring your lordships, that we neither have departed nor propose to depart from the doctrines of your church. We have retained the same discipline and forms of worship, as far as was consistent with our civil constitutions; and we have made no alterations or omissions in the book of Common Prayer, but such as that consideration prescribed, and such as were calculated to remove objections, which it appeared to us more conducive to union and general content to obviate, than to dispute. It is well known, that many great and pious men of the church of England have long wished for a revision of the liturgy, which it was deemed imprudent to hazard, lest it might become a precedent for repeated and improper alterations. This is with us the proper season for such a

revision. We are now settling and ordering the affairs of our church, and if wisely done, we shall have reason to promise ourselves all the advantages that can result from stability and union.

We are anxious to complete our Episcopal system, by means of the church of England.. We esteem and prefer it, and with gratitude acknowledge the patronage and favours for which, while connected, we have constantly been indebted to that church. These considerations, added to that of agreement in faith and worship, press us to repeat our former request, and to endeavour to remove your present hesitation, by sending you our proposed Ecclesiastical constitution and Book of Common Prayer.

These documents, we trust, will afford a full answer to every question that can arise on the subject. We consider your lordships' letter as very candid and kind; we repose full confidence in the assurances it gives; and that confidence, together with the liberality and catholicism of your venerable body, leads us to flatter ourselves, that you will not disclaim a branch of your church merely for having been in your lordships' opinion, if that should be the case, pruned rather more closely than its separation made absolutely necessary.

We have only to add, that as our church in sundry of these states have already proceeded to the election of persons to be sent for consecration, and others may soon proceed to the same, we pray to be favoured with as speedy an answer to this our se-

cond address, as in your great goodness you were pleased to give to our former one.

We are,

With great and sincere respect,

Most worthy and venerable Prelates,

Your obedient and

In Convention, Very humble servants,

Christ church, Philadelphia, June 26, 1786.

Signed by all the members.

No. 9. p. 131.

Communications from the archbishops of Canterbury and York.

To the committee of the general convention at Philadelphia, the Rev. Dr. White, president, the Rev. Dr. Smith, the Rev. Mr. Provoost, the honorable James Duane, Samuel Powell, and Richard Peters, Esqrs.

Mr. President and Gentlemen,

Influenced by the same sentiments of fraternal regard, expressed by the archbishops and bishops in their answer to your address, we desire you to be persuaded, that if we have not yet been able to comply with your request, the delay has proceeded from no tardiness on our part. The only cause of it, has been the uncertainty in which we were left by receiving your address unaccompanied by those communications with regard to your liturgy, articles and ecclesiastical constitution, without the knowledge of which we could not presume to apply to the legislature, for such powers as were necessary to the completion of your wishes. The journal of the conven-

tion, and the first part of your liturgy, did not reach us till more than two months after our receipt of your address; and we were not in possession of the remaining part of it and of your articles, till the last day of April. The whole of your communications was then, with as little delay as possible, taken into consideration at a meeting of the archbishops and fifteen of the bishops, being all who were then in London and able to attend; and it was impossible not to observe with concern, that if the essential doctrines of our common faith were retained, less respect however was paid to our liturgy than its own excellence, and your declared attachment to it, had led us to expect. Not to mention a variety of verbal alterations, of the necessity or propriety of which we are by no means satisfied, we saw with grief, that two of the confessions of our christian faith, respectable for their antiquity, have been entirely laid aside; and that even in that which is called the apostle's creed, an article is omitted, which was thought necessary to be inserted, with a view to a particular heresy, in a very early age of the church, and has ever since had the venerable sanction of universal reception. Nevertheless, as a proof of the sincere desire which we feel to continue in spiritual communion with the members of your church in America, and to complete the orders of your ministry, and trusting that the communications which we shall make to you, on the subject of these and some other alterations, will have their desired effect, we have, even under these circumstances, prepared a bill for conveying to us the powers neces-

sary for this purpose. It will in a few days be presented to parliament, and we have the best reasons to hope that it will receive the assent of the legislature. This bill will enable the archbishops and bishops to give episcopal consecration to the persons who shall be recommended, without requiring from them any oaths or subscriptions inconsistent with the situation in which the late revolution has placed them; upon condition that the full satisfaction of the sufficiency of the persons recommended, which you offer to us in your address, be given to the archbishops and bishops. You will doubtless receive it as a mark both of our friendly disposition toward you, and of our desire to avoid all delay on this occasion, that we have taken this earliest opportunity of conveying to you this intelligence, and that we proceed (as supposing ourselves invested with that power which for your sakes we have requested) to state to you particularly the several heads, upon which that satisfaction which you offer, will be accepted, and the mode in which it may be given. The anxiety which is shown by the church of England to prevent the intrusion of unqualified persons into even the inferior offices of our ministry, confirms our own sentiments, and points it out to be our duty, very earnestly to require the most decisive proofs of the qualifications of those who may be offered for admission to that order, to which the superintendence of those offices is committed. At our several ordinations of a deacon and a priest, the candidate submits himself to the examination of the bishop as to his proficiency in learning; he gives the

proper security of his soundness in the faith by the subscriptions which are made previously necessary; he is required to bring testimonials of his virtuous conversation during the three preceding years; and that no mode of inquiry may be omitted, public notice of his offering himself to be ordained is given in the parish church where he resides or ministers, and the people are solemnly called upon to declare, if they know any impediment for the which he ought not to be admitted. At the time of ordination too, the same solemn call is made on the congregation then present.

Examination, subscription and testimonials are not indeed repeated at the consecration of an English bishop, because the person to be consecrated has added to the securities given at his former ordinations, that sanction which arises from his having constantly lived and exercised his ministry under the eyes and observation of his country. But the objects of our present consideration are very differently circumstanced; their sufficiency in learning, the soundness of their faith, and the purity of their manners, are not matters of notoriety here; means therefore must be found to satisfy the archbishop who consecrates, and the bishops who present them, that, in the words of our church, "They be apt and meet for their learning and godly conversation, to exercise their ministry duly to the honour of God, and the edifying of his church, and to be wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ.

With regard to the first qualification, sufficiency in good learning, we apprehend that the subjecting a person, who is to be admitted to the office of a bishop in the church, to that examination which is required previous to the ordination of priests and deacons, might lessen that reverend estimation which ought never to be separated from the Episcopal character: we therefore do not require any farther satisfaction on this point, than will be given to us by the forms of testimonials in the annexed paper; fully trusting that those who sign them will be well aware, how greatly incompetence in this respect must lessen the weight and authority of the bishop and affect the credit of the Episcopal church.

Under the second head, that of subscription, our desire is to require that subscription only to be repeated, which you have already been called upon to make by the tenth article of your ecclesiastical constitution. But we should forget the duty which we owe to our own church, and act inconsistently with that sincere regard which we bear to yours, if we were not explicit in declaring, that, after the disposition we have shewn to comply with the prayer of your address, we think it now incumbent upon you to use your utmost exertions also for the removal of any stumbling block of offence, which may possibly prove an obstacle to the success of it. We therefore most earnestly exhort you, that previously to the time of your making such subscription, you restore to its integrity the apostle's creed, in which you have omitted an article merely, as it seems, from

misapprehension of the sense in which it is understood by our church; nor can we help adding, that we hope you will think it but a decent proof of the attachment which you profess to the services of your liturgy, to give to the other two creeds a place in your book of Common Prayer, even though the use of them should be left discretional. We should be inexcusable too, if at the time when you are requesting the establishment of bishops in your church, we did not strongly represent to you that the eighth article of your ecclesiastical constitution appears to us to be a degradation of the clerical, and still more of the episcopal character. We persuade ourselves, that in your ensuing convention some alteration will be thought necessary in this article, before this reaches you; or, if not, that due attention will be given to it in consequence of our representation.

On the third and last head, which respects purity of manners, the reputation of the church, both in England and America, and the interest of our common christianity is so deeply concerned in it, that we feel it our indispensible duty to provide, on this subject, the most effectual securities. It is presumed, that the same previous public notice of the intention of the person to be consecrated will be given in the church where he resides in America, for the same reasons, and therefore nearly in the same form, with that used in England before our ordinations. The call upon the persons present at the time of consecration, must be deemed of little use before a congregation composed of those to whom the person to

be consecrated is unknown. The testimonials, signed by persons living in England, admit of reference and examination, and the characters of those who give them are subject to scrutiny, and, in cases of criminal deceit, to punishment. In proportion as these circumstances are less applicable to testimonials from America, those testimonials must be more explicit, and supported by a greater number of signatures. We therefore think it necessary that the several persons, candidates for episcopal consecration, should bring to us both a testimonial from the general convention of the episcopal church, with as many signatures as can be obtained, and a more particular one, from the respective conventions in those states which recommend them. It will appear from the tenor of the letters testimonial used in England, a form of which is annexed, that the ministers who sign them bear testimony to the qualifications of the candidates on their own personal knowledge. Such a testimony is not to be expected from the members of the general convention of the episcopal church in America, on this occasion. We think it sufficient, therefore, that they declare they know no impediment, but believe the person to be consecrated, is of a virtuous life and sound faith. We have sent you such a form as appears to us proper to be used for that purpose. More specific declarations must be made, by the members of the convention in each state from which the persons offered for consecration are respectively recommended. Their personal knowledge of them there can be no doubt of. We trust,

therefore, they will have no objection to the adoption of the form of a testimonial which is annexed and drawn up on the same principles, and containing the same attestations of personal knowledge with that above mentioned, as required previously to our ordinations. We trust we shall receive these testimonials signed by such a majority in each convention that recommend, as to leave no doubt of the fitness of the candidates upon the minds of those whose consciences are concerned in the consecration of them.

Thus much we have thought it right to communicate to you without reserve at present, intending to give you farther information as soon as we are able. In the mean time, we pray God to direct your counsels in this very weighty matter, and are, Mr. President and Gentlemen, your affectionate Brethren,

J. CANTUAR.
W. EBOR.

Form of a Testimonial for Priest's Orders in England.

To the Right Rev. Father in God —— by Divine permission Lord Bishop of ——.

We, whose names are here underwritten, testify from our personal knowledge of the life and behaviour of A. B. for the space of three years last past, that he hath during that time, lived piously, soberly, and honestly: Nor hath he at any time, as far as we know or believe, written, taught or held, any thing contrary to the doctrine or discipline of the church of England. And, moreover, we think him a person

worthy to be admitted to the sacred order of priest. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands. Dated the —— day of ——— in the year of our Lord ——.

Testimony from the General Convention.

We, whose names are underwritten, fully sensible how important it is that the sacred office of a bishop should not be unworthily conferred, and firmly persuaded that it is our duty to bear our testimony on this solemn occasion without partiality or affection, do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify, that A. B. is not, so far as we are informed, justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion or for viciousness of life; and that we do not know or believe there is any impediment or notable crime, on account of which he ought not to be consecrated to that holy office, but that he hath led his life, for the three years last past, piously, soberly and honestly.

Testimony from the members of the Convention in the state from whence the person is recommended for consecration.

We, whose names are underwritten, fully sensible how important it is that the sacred office of a bishop should not be unworthily conferred, and firmly persuaded that it is our duty to bear testimony on this solemn occasion without partiality or affection, do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify, that A. B. is not, so far as we are informed, justly liable to evil report either for error in religion, or for viciousness of life; and that we do not know or believe

there is any impediment or notable crime for which he ought not to be consecrated to that holy office. We do, moreover, jointly and severally declare, that having personally known him for three years last past, we do in our consciences believe him to be of such sufficiency in good learning, such soundness in the faith, and of such virtuous and pure manners and godly conversation, that he is apt and meet to exercise the office of a bishop, to the honour of God and the edifying of his church, and to be an wholesome example to the flock of Christ.

No. 10. Page 131.

Communication from the archbishop of Canterbury.

Canterbury, July 4, 1786.

To the committee of the general convention, &c. &c.

GENTLEMEN,

The enclosed act being now passed, I have the satisfaction of communicating it to you. It is accompanied by a copy of a letter, and some forms of testimonials, which I sent you by the packet of last month. It is the opinion here, that no more than three bishops should be consecrated for the United States of America; who may consecrate others at their return, if more be found necessary. But whether we can consecrate any, or not, must yet depend on the answers we may receive, to what we have written.

I am your humble servant,

J. CANTUAR.

An act to empower the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, to consecrate to the office of a bishop, persons being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions.

Whereas by the laws of this realm no person can be consecrated to the office of a bishop, without the king's license for his election to that office, and the royal mandate under the great seal for his confirmation and consecration: And whereas every person who shall be consecrated to the said office is required to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and also the oath of due obedience to the archbishop: And whereas there are divers persons subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions, inhabiting and residing within the said countries, who profess the public worship of Almighty God according to the principles of the church of England, and who, in order to provide a regular succession of ministers for the service of their church, are desirous of having certain of the subjects or citizens of those countries consecrated bishops, according to the form of consecration in the church of England: Be it enacted by the king's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the passing of this act, it shall and may be lawful to and for the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, together with such other bishops

as they shall call to their assistance, to consecrate persons being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions, bishops for the purposes aforesaid, without the king's license for their election, or the royal mandate under the great seal for their confirmation and consecration, and without requiring them to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and the oath of due obedience to the archbishop for the time being. Provided always, that no persons shall be consecrated bishops in the manner herein provided, until the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, shall have first applied for, and obtained his majesty's licence, by warrant under his royal signet and sign manual, authorizing and empowering him to perform such consecration, and expressing the name or names of the persons so to be consecrated; nor until the said archbishop has been fully ascertained of their sufficiency in good learning, of the soundness of their faith, and of the purity of their manners. Provided also, and be it hereby declared, that no person or persons consecrated to the office of a bishop in the manner aforesaid, nor any person or persons deriving their consecration from or under any bishops so consecrated, nor any person or persons admitted to the order of deacon or priest by any bishop or bishops so consecrated, or by the successor or successors of any bishop or bishops so consecrated, shall be thereby enabled to exercise his or their respective office or offices within his majesty's dominions. Provided always, and be it further en-

acted, that a certificate of such consecration shall be given under the hand and seal of the archbishop who consecrates, containing the name of the person so consecrated, with the addition as well of the country whereof he is a subject or citizen, as of the church in which he is appointed bishop, and the further description of his not having taken the said oaths, being exempted from the obligation of so doing by virtue of this act.

No. 11. p. 134.

Address to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

MOST WORTHY AND VENERABLE PRELATES,

In pursuance of your graces' communications to the standing committee of our church, received by the June packet, and the letter of his grace the archbishop of Canterbury, of July the fourth, enclosing the act of parliament "to empower the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, to consecrate to the office of a bishop, persons being subjects or citizens, of countries out of his majesty's dominions," a general convention, now sitting, have the honour of offering their unanimous and hearty thanks, for the continuance of your christian attention to this church; and particularly for your having so speedily acquired a legal capacity, of complying with the prayer of our former addresses.

We have taken into our most serious and deliberate consideration, the several matters so affectionately recommended to us in those communications, and whatever could be done towards a com-

pliance with your fatherly wishes and advice, consistently with our local circumstances, and the peace and unity of our church, hath been agreed to; as, we trust, will appear from the enclosed act of our convention, which we have the honour to transmit to you, together with the journal of our proceedings.

We are, with great and sincere respect,
Most worthy and venerable Prelates,
Your obedient and very humble servants,
(By Order)
In general Convention, SAMUEL PROVOOST, Prest.
At Wilmington, in the State of Delaware, October 11th, 1786.

No 12. Page, 136.

A letter from Granville Sharp, esq. to Dr. Benjamin Franklin, with extracts of letters.

Extract of a letter from Granville Sharp to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated 13th. September, 1785.

"All these circumstances prove that the present time is very important and critical for the promotion of the interests and future extension of the Episcopal church in America, and that no time should be lost in obtaining authority for the archbishops and bishops of England to dispense with the oaths of allegiance in the *consecration of bishops for foreign churches,* that they may be restored to their unquestionable right as christian bishops to extend the *Episcopal church of Christ* all over the world."

"An immediate interference is become the more necessary, not only on account of the pretensions of Dr. Seabury and the *nonjuring bishops of Scotland* (to which, however, I hope my letters will have given a timely check) but also to guard against the presumption of Mr. Wesley and other *Methodists;* who, it seems, have sent over some persons under the name of *Superintendants*, with an assumed authority to ordain *Priests*, as if they were really invested with *Episcopal authority.*"

"Some accounts of this were read to the society for propagating the gospel in May last, from the letters of their missionaries; and I have since heard that some methodistical clergymen have procured consecration from the *Moravian churches*, which the latter had received from the bishops of Poland. These attempts of the sectaries prove, however, that they perceive among the Americans *an increasing inclination* towards Episcopal government, of which they want to take an undue advantage; and consequently they prove, also, that the exertions of every sincere friend to the church of England are peculiarly necessary at this time to counteract them, and to facilitate the communication of a pure and irreprehensible Episcopacy to America, by removing the obstacles which at present *restrain the archbishops and bishops of England, from extending the church of England beyond the bounds of English government.*"

"I should also inform your grace, that America is not the only part wherein protestant Episcopacy is

likely to be extended, when the rights of election are better understood: for had I been prepared in the year 1767, on this point, as I am at present, I have reason to believe that a protestant Episcopal church would have been promoted in Holland, and in several parts of Germany and Switzerland, long before this time."

"How I happened to be concerned in so important an affair, (if your grace should have leisure and curiosity to be informed) I am ready to communicate on receiving your commands, &c.

Extract of a letter from Granville Sharp to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated 17th. February, 1786.

"Since I had the honor of speaking to your grace on this subject, I have perused Dr. Smith's sermon, which was preached before the convention at Philadelphia; and though I have still great fears about the propriety of the alterations they have made in the liturgy, yet there seems to be some ground to hope that they will be able to assign a reasonable excuse for the changes, without giving occasion to suspect any want of belief in the several articles which they have omitted: for Dr. Smith plainly insinuates that they proceeded on the model of the alterations that were proposed to the English convocation in 1689: for which, several circumstances have induced me to entertain a favourable opinion. In looking over the MS. account of archbishop Sharp's life, I find that he was one of the King's commissioners for

that business, and took infinite pains therein, being sensible that *some* alterations might be made with advantage. He was also the person, who first proposed in convocation that Dr. Tillotson should be appointed prolocutor, in order to favour the *intended alterations*. Dr. Nichols has given a *short* general account of that business in his '*Apparatus ad defensionem ecclesiæ anglicanæ;*" but I never heard that the transactions at length were ever printed; and therefore am surprised to find that the convention at Philadelphia had a full account of that important business before them for their guidance. Dr. Nichols highly commends the alterations that were then intended, and few men were better qualified to be competent judges of that matter. If these circumstances be duly considered there seems room to discriminate between the motives which might induce the convention at Philadelphia to make such large subtractions from our liturgy, and the real propriety or impropriety of those subtractions, at least so far that the latter need not be held forth as a ground of objection against the candidates for consecration, if in other respects the candidates themselves should be found *unexceptionable*, and should readily profess a sound and unequivocal belief in the fundamental articles of our faith; for this will surely justify their consecration before God and man; and more especially if they will previously engage and promise, that when they have received authority, they will *not lay hands on any man except on the like christian conditions*, independent of all national forms and rituals of

mere human authority, which cannot annul the necessity of maintaining an *orthodox ministry* in Christ's Episcopal Church, howsoever the governments under which they live, should think proper to model the public forms of worship for their respective jurisdictions. And therefore I beg leave humbly to submit to your grace, that if any notice is to be taken of the *late rejection of creeds from the liturgy* in your grace's intended answer to the American requisition; whether, instead of stating that measure as a *just cause of refusal*, it may not be more advisable to mention it rather as *a just cause for your exhorting and giving them timely warning* NOT *to send over any candidates for consecration, but such as are known to profess a sound belief in the fundamental articles of the Christian faith*? and more particularly in the Scriptural doctrine of the holy trinity, and in the real personality and actual agency of the holy spirit as the divine comforter and instructor to the end of the world? For these necessary articles of faith are not more perverted by the *Socinians*, than by a sect professing principles diametrically opposite to them, I mean the modern *Mysticks*, who assert that *Christ is the only God;* though the effect of these very opposite tenets is precisely the same, viz. that both sects *are led* to deny *the personality of the holy spirit;* and therefore, by *what spirit* they are *so led*, we may fairly judge by the fruits. Some *Americans* have lately adopted these strange notions, which is the reason of my mentioning them," &c.

Letter to Dr. Franklin.

Old Jewry, London, August 19, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

Nothing could have been more truly acceptable to me than your excellency's obliging present of the new American Prayer Book; and the more especially, as I had the happiness of finding that the convention have retained in the litany and other prayers, as well as in the articles of religion, an ample testimony to the most essential doctrines of the church of England, and that they have really proceeded upon the plan laid down by the king's commissioners in 1689, of whom my own grandfather (afterwards archbishop Sharp) was one, who took a very active part in that business, though he is not mentioned in the preface of the new Prayer Book. This I discovered by a MS. account of my grandfather's life, much about the time that many vague reports were current here, of *immoderate and unjustifiable* changes made in the liturgy by the American convention: for the *Socinians* flattered themselves (through a mere mistake of Dr. Price, in a note which he had added to Dr. Rush's letter of October 25, 1785, as published in the newspapers) that the proceedings of the convention had been "*similar*" to those of *one* episcopal congregation at Boston, which adopted a liturgy—"*formed after the manner of Dr. Clarke and Mr. Lindsey.*" These reports would have given me much more uneasiness, if the perusal of Dr. Smith's sermon (preached before the convention) had not induced me *to hope* that the plan of the year 1689 would really be adopted by the

convention as a model of proceeding; and I was well satisfied that the said plan was sufficiently orthodox, because I was confident, that if it had been otherwise, my grandfather would not have endeavoured to promote it. Nevertheless the reports of *socinianism* gave great offence to many worthy people here, and more especially to the *bishops*, who had been sincerely disposed to promote the church of America, as declared in my former letters; but on hearing of the confident reports of the *Socinians* they seemed to give up all hopes of being able to hold any communication with the convention. In this state of the business I thought it my duty to explain in writing to our worthy primate, the archbishop of Canterbury, my reasons for *hoping* that the convention would be able to assign such a reasonable excuse for the changes they were reported to have made, as might be sufficient to remove *that ground of objection against the candidates for consecration*, if, in other respects, the candidates themselves were found *unexceptionable*. An extract from that letter I have inclosed for your excellency's perusal, dated February 17, last: and I earnestly entreated that the bishops here, might, at least, *be prepared* with authority to dispense with the oaths in giving consecration, a point which I had also previously solicited in a letter dated September 13, 1785. As the convention transmitted no account of their transactions, when they wrote to the two archbishops, there was no sufficient evidence for a direct confutation of the reports respecting *socinianism;* and therefore the great caution

and reserve expressed in the joint answer of the archbishops was unquestionably right and perfectly necessary, under such a state of *uncertainty respecting christian doctrine!*

The Archbishop of Canterbury, with his usual condescension and politeness, was pleased to communicate to me, very lately, the contents of that letter, as also the proposed forms of testimonials which it enclosed: and howsoever these may be received by the convention, I am bound to acknowledge my hearty approbation of them, being thoroughly convinced that they were dictated by the most unaffected sincerity of heart, and (I may even say) *apostolical* concern for the promotion of the true catholic church in America.

Nevertheless, the archbishops have not yet received any acknowledgment that their letter has reached America, except the short mention of it in your excellency's obliging letter to me. Had the gentlemen, deputed by the convention to correspond with the archbishops, thought proper to send them a short general description of the new liturgy, with some account also of the plan upon which it was formed, they would have prevented the apprehensions and suspicions occasioned by the late reports about *socinianism*, against which the liturgy itself bears ample testimony. I had hoped, however, that nothing would have been omitted therein, but the too frequent *repetitions* of our liturgy: and that if *more creeds than one* had been considered as falling under *the same head of correction*, that, at least the *Nicene*

creed might have been appointed to be used instead of the common creed, on some particular festivals, as Christmas Day, or Trinity Sunday, with a discretionary power in the minister to use occasionally the Athanasian creed, as all these creeds may *equally* be proved by unquestionable testimonies of scripture. Nevertheless the resolution expressed in the preface. that they dont mean to separate from the church of England in principles, together with the unequivocal declarations still retained in the new liturgy of the indispensable faith and worship due *to the three divine persons* (whose existence in *the one divine nature* or *godhead* is so clearly revealed in scripture, and into whose religious service we are equally enlisted by the baptismal profession and vows being made expressly in the names of *all the three*) must undoubtedly give sincere satisfaction to all true christians, notwithstanding the omission of several other things which they would wish to have been also retained. And, therefore, from my confidence of the unexceptionable religious character of the English bishops in general (without waiting to hear their sentiments declared by themselves) I may venture to repeat what I asserted in my former letters, that the bishops of England will be still sincerely inclined to promote the welfare of the episcopal churches in America, and to maintain an affectionate communication with them as sister churches, provided that the gentlemen elected to be sent for consecration are really in themselves *unexceptionable:* and I have the satisfaction to inform your excellency, that the archbishops have already prepared themselves to com-

ply with the requisition of the American churches, by obtaining an act of Parliament in the last session to remove the former difficulty about the oaths, a copy of which is inclosed. The late accounts in the public papers, that the episcopal churches of Virginia and New York had *elected* candidates for the Episcopal Office *in their respective Provinces,* gave me very particular satisfaction, because I had understood from former accounts that the *general convention had nominated the candidates;* which would have been a dangerous precedent of infringement on the ancient rights of the clergy and people in each province respectively to *elect their own bishops;* and I should have had still much more sincere satisfaction if these two provinces had adopted the *Apostolic mode* of electing *two unexceptionable candidates for each see,* whose acceptance should be determined by *lot,* as revived by the Spanish bishops in the council of *Barcelona* (see my tract on congregational courts p. 89, 90.) but perhaps, upon the whole, it may be more prudent to defer *the decision of the lot,* until three or four bishops are actually resident in America; who can then more effectually examine (as their apostolical duty requires) the qualifications and characters of the elected candidates, by calling upon the people, publickly, for information whether any just exceptions are known, *before the lot is cast,* because even a *legal exception* would seem to be made too late, if discovered *after* the solemn appeal to Divine Providence by lot and previous prayer; for in such a case there seems to be no alternative: no-

thing but an humble submission and reliance on the *same Providence*, for all the future consequences of the decision whatever they may be; unless some *subsequent* misconduct should render the interference of the other bishops necessary.

I send herewith a duplicate of my letter respecting a *paper currency not liable to depreciation*, which was sent by the Mediator, capt. Kennydy; and I remain with true respect and esteem, dear sir,

Your excellency's most obliged
Humble servant,
GRANVILLE SHARP.

His excellency Benjamin Franklin, Esq.
President of the State of Pennsylvania.

No. 13. Page 137.

An act of the general convention of clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church, in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and South Carolina, held at Wilmington, in the state of Delaware, on Wednesday, the 11th of October, 1786.

Whereas, at a general convention of clerical and lay deputies of the Protestant Episcopal church in sundry of the United States of America, viz. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina, holden at the city of Philadelphia, on the Tuesday before the feast of St. Michael, in the year of our Lord, 1785, and divers subsequent days, it was agreed and declared, that " the Book of Common Prayer and Administra-

tion of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Church of England," should be continued to be used by this church, as the same was altered by the said convention, in a certain instrument of writing, passed by their authority, entitled, "alterations of the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal church, in the United States of America, in order to render the same conformable to the American revolution and the constitutions of the respective states;" And it was further agreed and declared, that the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England, as altered by an instrument of writing passed under the authority of the aforesaid convention, entitled "Alterations in the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England, proposed and recommended to the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States of America, should be used in this church, when the same should have been ratified by the conventions which had respectively sent deputies to the said general convention;"—And thereupon the said convention, anxious to complete their Episcopal system by means of the church of England, did transcribe and transmit an address to the most reverend and right reverend the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the bishops of the church of England, earnestly entreating that venerable body to confer

the Episcopal character on such persons as should be recommended by this church, in the several states so represented:

And whereas the clerical and lay deputies of this church, have received the most friendly and affectionate letters in answer to the said address, from the said archbishops and bishops, opening a fair prospect of the success of their said applications; but at the same time earnestly exhorting this convention to use their utmost exertions for the removal of certain objections by them made, against some parts of the alterations in the Book of Common Prayer and Rites and Ceremonies of this church, last mentioned; In pursuance whereof, this present general convention hath been called and is now assembled; and being sincerely disposed to give every satisfaction to their lordships, which will be consistent with the union and general content of the church they represent; and declaring their steadfast resolution to maintain the same essential articles of faith and discipline with the church of England:

Now therefore, the said deputies do hereby determine and declare,

First, That in the creed commonly called the Apostle's creed, these words—"He descended into Hell," shall be and continue a part of that creed.

Secondly, That the Nicene creed shall also be inserted in the said Book of Common Prayer, immediately after the Apostle's creed, prefaced with the Rubrick [*or this.*]

And whereas, In consequence of the objections expressed by their lordships to the alterations in the book of Common Prayer last mentioned, the conventions in some of the states, represented in this general convention, have suspended the ratification and use of the said book of Common Prayer, by reason whereof it will be improper that persons to be consecrated or ordained as bishops, priests or deacons, respectively, should subscribe the declaration contained in the tenth article of the general ecclesiastical constitution, without some modification.

Therefore, it is hereby determined and declared,

Thirdly, That the second clause so to be subscribed by a bishop, priest or deacon of this church, in any of the states which have not already ratified or used the last mentioned book of Common Prayer, shall be in the words following—"And I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrine and worship of the protestant episcopal church, according to the use of the church of England, as the same is altered by the general convention, in a certain instrument of writing, passed by their authority, entitled, *Alterations of the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in order to render the same conformable to the American revolution and the constitutions of the respective States,* until the new book of Common Prayer, recommended by the general convention, shall be ratified or used in the state in which I am (bishop, priest or deacon, as the case may be) by the authority of the convention thereof.

And I do further solemnly engage, that when the said new book of Common Prayer shall be ratified or used by the authority of the convention in the state for which I am consecrated a bishop (or ordained a priest or deacon) I will conform to the doctrines and worship of the protestant episcopal church, as settled and determined in the last mentioned book of Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments, set forth by the general convention of the protestant episcopal church in the United States."

And it is hereby further determined and declared,

That these words in the preface to the new proposed book of Common Prayer, *viz.* "In the creed commonly called the apostle's creed, one clause is omitted as being of uncertain meaning; and"—together with the note referred to in that place, be, from henceforth, no part of the preface to the said proposed book of Common Prayer.

And it is hereby further determined and declared,

That the fourth article of religion in the new proposed book of Common Prayer, be altered to render it conformable to the adoption of the Nicene creed, as follows, "of the creeds. The two creeds, namely, that commonly called the apostle's creed and the Nicene creed, ought to be received and believed, because they," &c. &c.

Done in general convention, at Wilmington, in the state of Delaware, the day and year first aforesaid.

No. 14. Page 162.

To all persons to whom these presents shall come, or whom the same shall or may in any wise or at any time concern, we, John, by divine Providence, lord archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and metropolitan, send greeting——

Whereas by an act of Parliament passed at Westminster, in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of our sovereign lord George the third, king of Great Britain, France and Ireland, entituled, "An act to empower the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, to consecrate to the office of a bishop, persons being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions," it is enacted, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, together with such other bishops as they shall call to their assistance, to consecrate persons, being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions, bishops, for the purposes aforesaid, without the king's license for their election, or the royal mandate under the great seal for their confirmation and consecration, and without requiring them to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and the oath of due obedience to the archbishop for the time being. Provided always, that no persons shall be consecrated bishops in the manner herein provided, until the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, shall have first applied for and obtained

his majesty's license, by warrant under his royal signet and sign manual, authorising and empowering him to perform such consecration, and expressing the name or names of the persons so to be consecrated, nor until the said archbishop has been fully ascertained of their sufficiency in good learning, of the soundness of their faith, and of the purity of their manners. Provided also, and be it hereby declared, that no person or persons consecrated to the office of a bishop in the manner aforesaid, nor any person or persons deriving their consecration from or under any bishop so consecrated, nor any person or persons admitted to the order of deacon or priest by any bishop or bishops so consecrated, or by the successor or successors of any bishop or bishops so consecrated, shall be thereby enabled to exercise his or their respective office or offices within his majesty's dominions. Provided always, and be it further enacted, That a certificate of such consecration shall be given under the hand and seal of the archbishop who consecrates, containing the name of the person so consecrated, with the addition, as well of the country whereof he is a subject or citizen, as of the church in which he is appointed bishop, and the further description of his not having taken the said oaths, being exempted from the obligation of so doing by virtue of this act.—Now, know all men by these presents, that we, the said John lord archbishop of Canterbury, having obtained his majesty's license, by warrant under his royal signet and sign manual, did, in pursuance of the said act of Parliament, on Sun-

day, the fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, in the chapel of our palace, at Lambeth, in the county of Surry, admit our beloved in Christ, William White, clerk, D. D. a subject or citizen of the state of Pennsylvania, in North America, and rector of Christ church and St. Peter's, in the city of Philadelphia, in the said state, of whose sufficiency in good learning, soundness in the faith, and purity of manners we were fully ascertained, into the office of a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church, in the state of Pennsylvania aforesaid, to which the said William White hath been elected by the convention for the said state, as appears unto us by due testimony thereof by him produced, and him the said William White did then and there rightly and canonically consecrate a bishop, according to the manner and form prescribed and used by the church of England, his taking the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and canonical obedience only excepted, he being exempted from the obligation of taking the said oaths by virtue of the above recited act. Provided, that neither he the said bishop, nor any person or persons deriving their consecration from or under him, nor any person or persons admitted to the order of deacon or priest by him, or his successor or successors, shall be enabled to exercise his or their respective office or offices within his majesty's dominions. In testimony whereof we have caused our Archi-episcopal seal to be affixed to these presents.

—Given at Lambeth house, the day and year above written, and in the fourth year of our translation.

J. (L. S.) CANTUAR.

We, William lord archbishop of York, Charles lord bishop of Bath and Wells, and John lord bishop of Peterborough, were present and assisting at the consecration within mentioned.

W. EBOR.
C. BATH AND WELLS.
J. PETERBOROUGH.

The signatures of the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and of the bishops of Bath and Wells, and Peterborough, were made in my presence, February 4th, 1787.

WM. DICKES,
(*Copy.*) Secretary to the archbishop of Canterbury.

On Sunday, the fourth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, and in the fourth year of the translation of the most reverend father in God, John, by Divine Providence, lord archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and metropolitan, in the chapel at the palace at Lambeth, in the county of Surry, the said most reverend father in God, by virtue and authority of a certain license or warrant from his most gracious majesty, and our sovereign lord George the third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, and so forth, to him, in this behalf, directed,

the most reverend father in God, William, by the same Providence, lord archbishop of York, primate of England, and metropolitan, and the right reverend fathers in God, Charles, by divine permission, lord bishop of Bath and Wells, and John, by divine permission, lord bishop of Peterborough, assisting him, consecrated the reverend William White, doctor in divinity, rector of Christ church and St. Peter's, in the city of Philadelphia, a subject or citizen of the United States of North America, and the reverend Samuel Provoost, doctor in divinity, rector of Trinity church, in the city of New York, a subject or citizen also of the United States of North America, to the office of a bishop, respectively, the rites, circumstances and ceremonies anciently used in the church of England being observed and applied, according to the tenor of an act passed in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of his said majesty, entituled "An act to empower the archbishop of Canterbury, or the archbishop of York, for the time being, to consecrate to the office of a bishop, persons being subjects or citizens of countries out of his majesty's dominions," in the presence of me, Robert Jenner, notary public, one of the deputy registers of the province of Canterbury, being then and there present, the reverend and worshipful William Backhouse, doctor in divinity, archdeacon of Canterbury, the Rev. ——— Lort, doctor in divinity, the Rev. ——— Drake, doctor in divinity, William Dickes, Esquire, notary public, secretary to his grace the said lord archbishop of

Canterbury, with many others in great numbers then and there assembled. Which I attest.

Rt. Jenner,

(*Copy.*) Notary Public, actuary assumed.

And we, the underwritten notaries public, by royal authority duly admitted and sworn, residing in doctor's Commons, London, do hereby certify and attest, to all whom it may concern, that Robert Jenner, whose name is subscribed to the aforegoing act, was and is a notary public, and one of the deputy registers of the province of Canterbury, and that the letters, name and words "Rt. Jenner, notary public," thereto subscribed, were and are of the proper hand writing and subscription of the said Robert Jenner, and that we saw him sign the same, and that full faith and entire credit is and ought to be given to all the acts, subscriptions and attestations of the said Robert Jenner, as well in judgment as out. In testimony whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names, to serve and avail as occasion may require, at doctor's Commons, London, this fifth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven. Which we attest.

Edward Cooper, Notary Public.

(*Copy.*) William Abbot, Notary Public.

No. 15. p. 162.

Note of the Archbishop.

The archbishop desires to have the proper direction for a letter to bishop White at Falmouth; where if he can find time, he means to send a letter to Dr.

Chandler. If he should not be able to write to Dr. Chandler, he begs the bishop to assure him of his affectionate esteem and regard, and his hearty prayers for his better health. He wishes also for such a direction, as will be most proper for a letter, should occasion call for one, to the bishop in Philadelphia.

It is proper that the bishops should be informed, that the archbishop was mistaken about the consecrations in the province of York. They have always been attended by two bishops with the archbishop.

No. 16. p. 163.

1. *From his excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq. president of congress, to the Hon. John Adams, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Great Britain.**

New York, October 24, 1785.

Dear Sir,

Having yesterday written a long letter to you, I have now only to request your attention to the following business, which is of very great importance to those whom it concerns; and who form a considerable portion of the citizens of these states. The representatives of those professing the church of England system of religion, having been lately as-

* In the answer of Mr. Adams, he calls Mr. Lee "late president of Congress." The presidency of the latter ended two days after his writing of the letter, as appears from the printed Journals of the body, and the circumstance must have been known to Mr. Adams. Therefore, the letter was written while Mr. Lee was president, and must have been designed to carry with it the weight of his official character."

sembled at Philadelphia, where lay and clerical deputies from seven states were convened in general convention, for the purpose, among other things, of preserving and maintaining a succession of divines in their church, in a manner which they judge consonant to the gospel, and no way interfering with the religious or civil rights of others, have sent an address to the archbishops and bishops of England proposing a plan for the consecration of American bishops.—It is imagined that before any thing is done in this business by the bishops of England, they will consult the king and ministry; who it is apprehended may now, as heretofore, suppose that any step of the kind being taken in England, might be considered here as an officious intermeddling with our affairs that would give offence on this side the water—Should this be the case, the church of England members of congress have the greatest reliance on your liberal regard for the religious rights of all men, that you will remove mistaken scruples from the mind of administration, by representing how perfectly consonant it is with our revolution principles, professed throughout all these states, that every denomination of christians has a right to pursue its own religious modes, interfering not with others. That instead of giving offence, it must give content by evidencing a friendly disposition to accommodate the people here who are members of the church in question.

In proof of this, congress did lately show their attention to the accommodation of this class of chris-

tians, by communicating to the different executives your information from the Danish Minister of that king's willingness to facilitate the business of ordination for our church, and the assembly of Virginia hath incorporated this society, under which act of incorporation the assembly was held in that state, that sent both lay and clerical deputies to the general convention lately held in Philadelphia.

I have the honour to be, with sentiments of the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency John Adams, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America to the Court of London, at his house in Grosvenor square London.

2. *From Mr. Adams to Mr. Lee, in answer.**

Grosvenor Square, January 4, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

A day or two after the receipt of your letter of November 1, and that of Mr. Jay's which came with it, I wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury, by Col. Smith, for an hour when I might have the honour to pay my respects to his grace, and was answered very politely, that he would be glad to have the honour of seeing me, next day, between eleven and twelve. Accordingly I went yesterday, and was very agreeably

* There is in possession a copy of a letter to John Jay, Esq. containing the same in substance; it being in answer to a letter of that gentleman, then secretary of State for foreign affairs.

received, by a venerable and a candid prelate, with whom I had before only exchanged visits of ceremony. I told his grace, that at the desire of two very respectable characters in America, the late president of congress and the present secretary of state for the department of foreign affairs, I had the honour to be the bearer to his grace of a letter from a convention of delegates from the episcopal churches in most of the southern states, which had been transmitted to me open, that I might be acquainted with its contents. That in this business however, I acted in no official character, having no instructions from congress, nor indeed from the convention; but I thought it most respectful to them, as well as to his grace, to present the letter in person.—The archbishop answered, that all that he could say at present was, that he was himself very well disposed to give the satisfaction desired—for that he was by no means one of those who wished that contention should be kept up between the two countries, or between one party and another in America—but on the contrary, was desirous of doing every thing in his power to promote harmony and good-humour.—I then said, that if his grace would take the trouble of reading two letters from Mr. Lee and Mr. Jay, he would perceive the motives of those gentlemen in sending the letter to my care—I gave him the letters, which he read attentively and returned, and added that it was a great satisfaction to him to see, that gentlemen of character and reputation interested themselves in it—for that the episcopalians in the United States could not have the full

and complete enjoyment of their religious liberties without it—and he subjoined that it was also a great satisfaction to him, to have received this visit from me upon this occasion—and he would take the liberty to ask me, if it were not an improper question, whether the interposition of the English bishops—would not give uneasiness and dissatisfaction in America.—I replied that my answer could be only that of a private citizen, and in that capacity I had no scruple to say that the people of the United States in general were for a liberal and generous toleration. I might indeed employ a stronger word, and call it a right, and the first right of mankind, to worship God according to their consciences, and therefore that I could not see any reasonable ground for dissatisfaction, and that I hoped and believed that there would be none of any consequence.

His grace was then pleased to say, that religion in all countries, especially a young one, ought to be attended to, as it was the foundation of government. He hoped the characters which should be recommended, would be good ones. I replied that there were in the churches in America, able men of characters altogether irreproachable—and that such and such only, I presumed, would be recommended. I then rose to take my leave, and his grace then asked me, if he might be at liberty to mention, that I had made him this visit upon this occasion. I answered—certainly, if his grace should judge it proper. Thus, sir, I have fulfilled my commision, and remain as

usual—your sincere friend and most obedient servant,
A true Copy, JOHN ADAMS.
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

3. *Letter of the Archbishop of Canterbury to Mr. Adams.*

Lambeth House, February 27, 1786.

SIR,

After full communication with the archbishop of York, and the bishops, on the subject of the address, which you delivered to me from the deputies of the protestant episcopal church, in convention in Philadelphia, I concur with them in requesting the favour of you, to forward our answer to the committee appointed to receive it. Duplicates of the answer accompany this letter; which, if sent by different ships, we hope may give a better chance of the early arrival of one of them.

I have the honour to be,
Sir, your most obedient
Humble servant,
J. CANTUAR.

4. Certificate of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania, ss.

The Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Do hereby certify and make known to all whom it may concern, that agreeably to the frame of government and laws of this commonwealth—the cler-

gy and others, members of the church of England in Pennsylvania, are at liberty to take such means as they may think proper for keeping up a succession of religious teachers—Provided only, that the means they adopt for this purpose do not induce a subjection to any foreign jurisdiction civil or ecclesiastical.

Given in council under the hand of the honourable Charles Biddle, Esquire, Vice President, and the seal of the State, at Philadelphia, this twenty-fourth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, and in the tenth year of the commonwealth—

CHARLES BIDDLE, V. P.

(Attest) JOHN ARMSTRONG, Jr. Sec.

*5. A certificate of his excellency Patrick Henry, Esq. Governor of Virginia.**

By his excellency Patrick Henry Esq. governor of the commonwealth of Virginia.

It is certified and made known to all whom it may concern—That the protestant episcopal church is incorporated by an act of the legislature of this commonwealth, for that purpose made and provided: that there is no law existing in this commonwealth, which in any manner forbids the admission of bishops, or the exercise of their office: on the contrary, by the 16th article of the declaration of rights, it is

* This copy of the certificate of the governor of Virginia, was sent to the author by the Rev. Dr. Griffith, bishop elect of that state, to be laid before the convention of October, 1786

provided in the words following, viz.—"That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence, and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all, to practice christian forbearance, love and charity towards each other,"—which said article is now in full force.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the commonwealth to be affixed at Richmond, this first day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, and tenth of the commonwealth.

P. Henry.

No. 17. p. 163.

From Richard Peters, Esq.

London, March 4, 1786.

Gentlemen,

I yesterday waited on the archbishop of Canterbury, who received me with great politeness. I delivered the parcels you sent by me, but he had previously received the originals. He opened the conversation by saying, that on receipt of the address from the convention, which was conceived in terms that gave great satisfaction, the bishops had determined at once to comply with it, if the government would enable them by passing a law for the purpose. But hearing a number of reports, which the committee had not put it in their power to clear

up, by sending them all the proceedings of the convention, they thought it their duty to act cautiously, and restrained their desire to meet our wishes, till they had more full information on the subject. He said it was unnecessary to enter into the various reports of alterations said to be made, or intended by our churches, for he did not give credit to common reports, which are often circulated without foundation. Some alterations however, it appeared, had been made, and what the rest were, could not be told until the whole was laid before them. That some alterations were necessarily brought about by the change of circumstances, and were therefore proper, he allowed; but he hoped there would be found none which rendered our church substantially different from theirs, of which he considered it as a branch, and the bishops were obliged to examine what church ours was, before, from their source, they established an episcopacy over a people, who might perhaps hold tenets opposite to theirs. He did not know or believe this was the case with respect to us, but it became them to inquire. He feared some of our business had been done hastily. He showed me the answer to the address, which he said had been sincerely *felt* by every bishop who had signed it. He seemed very desirous of removing any doubts about their firm intentions to comply with our wishes: showed me the original draft of the answer in his hand writing. I observed there were no alterations made in it, and among nineteen bishops, who were all that were in town at the meeting of Parliament,

there was not a dissenting voice. He hoped so unanimous an opinion, must evidence beyond a doubt, the great desire all had to grant our request. They all from the bottom of their hearts wished our prosperity, and would do all in their power to promote it. But before they had the necessary information, it would be imprudent in them to act. He said there would be no difficulties with government, and was happy that all embarrassments, with respect to the civil powers of the United States, were removed by the certificates and papers transmitted. He had spoke to the king, on the receipt of the address, who expressed great satisfaction in it, and was ready to do what was required of him. That administration would promote the law, when it was recommended by the bishops as proper. They therefore, being in a responsible situation, must proceed with caution. He desired nothing he had said, should be thought calculated to throw difficulties in the way; for there really was no disposition of that kind in the bishops, or members of the government. He hoped our convention at the next meeting, would consider the embarrassments too many alterations would throw in the way of their application here, and if any of them substantially deviated from the doctrines, or worship of this church, it would frustrate the views of our churches, by putting it out of the power of those here, who have every good disposition to serve us, to forward our application. He wished great care might be taken, of the character of those sent for consecration, as much depended on this. They should,

however, commit themselves to our discretion in this respect, and hoped they should have no reason to repent it. He declined answering the question I was desired by Dr. White to put to him, respecting the validity of Scotch consecrations, having first asked me whether the question came from the convention? I told him it was to satisfy private inquiries, which were made with no view of seeking consecration from that source.* I find we can have no bishop, until we let the prelates here see what church we have made. I think it would be prudent in our church, to put off any material alterations until we have bishops consecrated. If we make any substantial alterations, they will be carped at by those who will make the bishops uneasy; and to keep peace at home, they will refuse to meddle abroad, notwithstanding their strong desire to do what we wish.

I am, gentlemen,
With much esteem
Your very obedient servant,
RICHARD PETERS.

Rev. Dr. White, Rev. Dr. Smith, Rev. Mr. Provoost, Hon. James Duane, Samuel Powell, Esq.

P. S. Mr. Adams has been very attentive to the business of an address, with which he waited on the

* Notwithstanding the prudent reserve of the archbishop at this time, he is said to have given his influence in favour of the non juring bishops about three years afterwards; when, on the decease of the last pretender, they began to pray for the king on the throne, and some of them came up to London, to solicit the repeal of the penal laws made against them.

archbishop, who in return waited on him with the answer transmitted. I think the committee should return him their thanks, for the part he (Mr. Adams) has taken.

Dont publish the bishop's answer, as it will get over here, and be a subject of news-paper discussion.

No. 18. Page 167.

An act of the clergy of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The good Providence of Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness, having lately blessed the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America, by supplying it with a complete and entire ministry, and affording to many of her communion the benefit of the labours, advice and government of the successors of the Apostles;

We, Presbyters of said church in the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, deeply impressed with the most lively gratitude to the Supreme Governor of the universe, for his goodness in this respect, and with the most ardent love to his church, and concern for the interest of her sons, that they may enjoy all the means that Christ, the great shepherd and bishop of souls, has instituted for leading his followers into the ways of truth and holiness, and preserving his church in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace; to the end that the people committed to our respective charges may enjoy the benefit and advantage of those offices, the administration of which belongs to the highest order of the

ministry, and to encourage and promote, as far as in us lies, a union of the whole Episcopal church in these states, and to perfect and compact this mystical body of Christ, do hereby nominate, elect and appoint the Rev. Edward Bass, a Presbyter of said church, and Rector of St. Paul's, in Newburyport, to be our bishop; and we do promise and engage to receive him as such, when canonically consecrated, and invested with the apostolic office and powers, by the right reverend the bishops hereafter named, and to render him all that canonical obedience and submission, which, by the laws of Christ and the constitution of our church, is due to so important an office.

And we now address the right reverend the bishops in the states of Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania, praying their united assistance in consecrating our said brother, and canonically investing him with the apostolic office and powers. This request we are induced to make, from a long acquaintance with him, and from a perfect knowledge of his being possessed of that love to God and benevolence to men, that piety, learning and good morals, that prudence and discretion, requisite to so exalted a station, as well as that personal respect and attachment of the communion at large in these states, which will make him a valuable acquisition to the order, and, we trust, a rich blessing to the church.

Done at a meeting of the Presbyters, whose names are underwritten, held at Salem, in the

county of Essex, and commonwealth of Massachusetts, the fourth day of June, Anno Salutis, 1789.

Samuel Parker, Rector of trinity church, Boston.

T. Fitch Oliver, Rector of St. Michael's church, Marblehead.

John Cousens Ogden, Rector of Queen's chapel, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

William Montague, minister of Christ's church, Boston.

Tillotson Brunson, assistant minister of Christ's church, Boston.

Resolves on the foregoing.

1st. *Resolved,* That a complete order of bishops, derived as well under the English as the Scots line of episcopacy, doth now subsist within the United States of America, in the persons of the right Rev. William White, D. D. bishop of the protestant episcopal church in the state of Pennsylvania; the right Rev. Samuel Provoost, D. D. bishop of the said church in the state of New York, and the right Rev. Samuel Seabury, D. D. bishop of the said church in the state of Connecticut.

2d. *Resolved,* That the said three bishops are fully competent to every proper act and duty of the episcopal office and character in these United States, as well in respect to the consecration of other bishops, and the ordering of priests and deacons, as for the government of the church, according to such rules, canons and institutions, as now are, or here-

after may be duly made and ordained by the church in that case.

3d. *Resolved*, That in christian charity, as well as of duty, necessity and expediency, the churches represented in this convention ought to contribute, in every manner in their power, towards supplying the wants, and granting every just and reasonable request of their sister churches in these states; and, therefore,

4th. *Resolved*, That the right Rev. Dr. White and the right Rev. Dr. Provoost be, and they hereby are, requested to join with the right Rev. Dr. Seabury, in complying with the prayer of the clergy of the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, for the consecration of the Rev. Edward Bass, bishop elect of the churches in the said states; but that, before the said bishops comply with the request aforesaid, it be proposed to the churches in the New England states to meet the churches of these states, with the said three bishops, in an adjourned convention, to settle certain articles of union and discipline among all the churches, previous to such consecration.

5th. *Resolved*, That if any difficulty or delicacy, in respect to the archbishops and bishops of England, shall remain with the right Rev. Doctors White and Provoost, or either of them, concerning their compliance with the above request, this convention will address the archbishops and bishops, and hope thereby to remove the difficulty."

No. 19. p. 169.

An Address to the Most Reverend the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Most Venerable and illustrious Fathers and Prelates:

We, the bishops, clergy and laity of the protestant episcopal church in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina, impressed with every sentiment of love and veneration, beg leave to embrace this earliest occasion, in general convention, to offer our warmest, most sincere and grateful acknowledgments to you, and (by your means) to all the venerable bishops of the church over which you preside, for the manifold instances of your former condescension to us, and solicitude for our spiritual welfare. But we are more especially called to express our thankfulness, for that particular act of your fatherly goodness, whereby we derive, under you, a pure episcopacy and succession of the ancient order of bishops, and are now assembled through the blessing of God, as a church duly constituted and organized, with the happy prospect before us of a future full and undisturbed exercise of our holy religion, and its extension to the utmost bounds of this continent, under an ecclesiastical constitution, and a form of worship, which we believe to be truly apostolical.

The growing prospect of this happy diffusion of christianity, and the assurance we can give you that our churches are spreading and flourishing throughout these United States, we know, will yield you more

solid joy, and be considered as a more ample reward of your goodness to us, than all the praises and expressions of gratitude which the tongues of men can bestow.

It gives us pleasure to assure you, that, during the present sitting of our convention, the utmost harmony has prevailed through all our delibrations, that we continue, as heretofore, most sincerely attached to the faith and doctrine of the church of England; and that not a wish appears to prevail, either among our clergy or laity, of ever departing from that church in any essential article.

The business of most material consequence which hath come before us, at our present meeting, hath been an application from our sister churches in the eastern states, expressing their earnest desire of a general union of the whole episcopal church in the United States, both in doctrine and discipline; and, as a primary means of such union, praying the assistance of our bishops in the consecration of a bishop elect for the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. We therefore judge it necessary to accompany this address with the papers, which have come before us on that very interesting subject, and of the proceedings we have had thereupon, by which you will be enabled to judge concerning the particular delicacy of our situation and, probably, to relieve us from any difficulties which may be found therein.

The application from the church in the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire is in the following words.

[Here follows the application as in the preceding number.]

At the meeting aforesaid,

Voted, That the Rev. Samuel Parker be authorised and empowered to transmit copies of the foregoing act, to be by him attested, to the right Rev. the bishops in Connecticut, New York and Pennsylvania; and that he be appointed our agent, to appear at any convocation to be holden at Pennsylvania or New York, and to treat upon any measures that may tend to promote an union of the episcopal church throughout the United States of America, or that may prove advantageous to the interest of the said church. EDWARD BASS, *Chairman.*

A true copy.

Attest. Samuel Parker.

This was accompanied with a letter from the Rev. Samuel Parker, the worthy rector of Trinity church, Boston, to the right Rev. bishop White, dated June 21st, 1789, of which the following is an extract:—"The clergy here have appointed me their agent, to appear at any convocation to be held at New York or Pennsylvania; but I fear the situation of my family and parish will not admit of my being absent so long as a journey to Philadelphia would take. When I gave you encouragement that I should attend, I was in expectation of having my parish supplied by some gentlemen from Nova Scotia; but I am now informed, they will not be here till some time in August. Having, therefore, no prospect of attending in person at your general convention next month, I

am requested to transmit you an attested copy of an act of the clergy of this and the state of New Hampshire, electing the Rev. Edward Bass our bishop, and requesting the united assistance of the right Rev. bishops of Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut, to invest him with apostolic powers. This act I have now the honour of enclosing, and hope it will reach you before the meeting of your general convention in July.

"The clergy of this state are very desirous of seeing an union of the whole episcopal church in the United States take place; and it will remain with our brethren at the southward to say, whether this shall be the case or not; whether we shall be an united or divided church. Some little difference in government may exist in different states, without affecting the essential points of union and communion."

In the like spirit, the right Rev. Dr. Seabury, bishop of the church of Connecticut, in his letter to the Rev. Dr. Smith, dated July 23d, writes on the subject of union, &c. as followeth.——"The wish of my heart, and the wish of the clergy and of the church people of this state, would certainly have carried me and some of the clergy to your general convention, had we conceived we could have attended with propriety. The necessity of an union of all the churches, and the disadvantages of our present dis-union, we feel and lament equally with you; and I agree with you, that there may be a strong and efficacious union between churches, where the

usages are different. I see not why it may not be so in the present case, as soon as you have removed those obstructions, which, while they remain, must prevent all possibility of uniting. The church of Connecticut consists, at present, of nineteen clergymen in full orders, and more than twenty thousand people, they suppose, as respectable as the church in any state of the union."

After the most serious deliberation upon this important business, and cordially joining with our brethren of the eastern or New England churches in the desire of union, the following resolves were unanimously adopted in convention, viz:

[Here follow the resolves, as given in the preceding number.]

We have now, most venerable Fathers, submitted to your consideration whatever relates to this important business of union among all our churches in these United States. It was our original and sincere intention to have obtained three bishops, at least, immediately consecrated by the bishops of England, for the seven states comprehended within our present union. But that intention being frustrated through unforeseen circumstances, we could not wish to deny any present assistance, which may be found in our power to give to any of our sister churches, in that way which may be most acceptable to them, and in itself legal and expedient.

We ardently pray for the continuance of your favour and blessing, and that, as soon as the urgency of other weighty concerns of the church will allow, we may be favoured with that fatherly advice and di-

rection, which to you may appear most for the glory of God and the prosperity of our churches, upon the consideration of the foregoing documents and papers.

Done in convention, this 8th day of August, 1789, and directed to be signed by all the members, as the act of their body, and by the president officially.

[Signed by the president and all the members.]

No. 20. p. 175.

A general Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States of America.

Art. 1. There shall be a general convention of the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America, on the first Tuesday of August, in the year of our Lord 1792, and on the first Tuesday of August in every third year afterwards, in such place as shall be determined by the convention; and special meetings may be called at other times, in the manner hereafter to be provided for; and this church, in a majority of the states which shall have adopted this constitution, shall be represented, before they shall proceed to business, except that the representation from two states shall be sufficient to adjourn; and in all business of the convention, freedom of debate shall be allowed.

Art. 2. The church in each state shall be entitled to a representation of both the clergy and the laity; which representation shall consist of one or more deputies, not exceeding four of each order,

chosen by the convention of the state; and in all questions, when required by the clerical or lay representation from any state, each order shall have one vote; and the majority of suffrages by states shall be conclusive in each order, provided such majority comprehend a majority of the states represented in that order. The concurrence of both orders shall be necessary, to constitute a vote of the convention. If the convention of any state should neglect or decline to appoint clerical deputies, or if they should neglect or decline to appoint lay deputies, or if any of those of either order appointed should neglect to attend, or be prevented by sickness or any other accident, such state shall nevertheless be considered as duly represented by such deputy or deputies as may attend, whether lay or clerical. And if, through the neglect of the convention of any of the churches which shall have adopted, or may hereafter adopt this constitution, no deputies, either lay or clerical, should attend at any general convention, the church in such state shall nevertheless be bound by the acts of such convention.

Art. 3. The bishops of this church, when there shall be three or more, shall, whenever general conventions are held, form a house of revision, and when any proposed act shall have passed in the general convention, the same shall be transmitted to the house of revision, for their concurrence. And if the same shall be sent back to the convention, with the negative or non-concurrence of the house of revision, it shall be again considered in the general convention,

and if the convention shall adhere to the said act, by a majority of three-fifths of their body, it shall become a law to all intents and purposes, notwithstanding the non-concurrence of the house of revision; and all acts of the convention shall be authenticated by both houses. And in all cases, the house of bishops shall signify to the convention their approbation or disapprobation, the latter with their reasons in writing, within two days after the proposed act shall have been reported to them for concurrence, and in failure thereof it shall have the operation of a law. But until there shall be three or more bishops, as aforesaid, any bishop attending a general convention shall be a member ex officio, and shall vote with the clerical deputies of the state to which he belongs. And a bishop shall then preside.

Art. 4. The bishop or bishops in every state shall be chosen agreeably to such rules, as shall be fixed by the convention of that state. And every bishop of this church shall confine the exercise of his episcopal office to his proper diocess or district, unless requested to ordain, or confirm, or perform any other act of the episcopal office, by any church destitute of a bishop.

Art. 5. A protestant episcopal church in any of the United States, not now represented, may, at any time hereafter, be admitted, on acceeding to this constitution.

Art. 6. In every state, the mode of trying clergymen shall be instituted by the convention of the church therein. At every trial of a bishop, there

shall be one or more of the episcopal order present; and none but a bishop shall pronounce sentence of deposition or degradation from the ministry on any clergyman, whether bishop, or presbyter, or deacon.

Art. 7. No person shall be admitted to holy orders, until he shall have been examined by the bishop, and by two presbyters, and shall have exhibited such testimonials and other requisites, as the canons, in that case provided, may direct. Nor shall any person be ordained, until he shall have subscribed the following declaration: "I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation: And I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the protestant episcopal church in these United States." No person ordained by a foreign bishop shall be permitted to officiate as a minister of this church, until he shall have complied with the canon or canons in that case provided, and have also subscribed the aforesaid declaration.

Art. 8. A book of common prayer, administration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the church, articles of religion, and a form and manner of making, ordaining and consecrating bishops, priests and deacons, when established by this or a future general convention, shall be used in the protestant episcopal church in these states, which shall have adopted this constitution.

Art. 9. This constitution shall be unalterable, unless in general convention, by the church in a majority of the states, which may have adopted the

same; and all alterations shall be first proposed in one general convention, and made known to the several state conventions, before they shall be finally agreed to, or ratified in the ensuing general convention.

Alterations in the subsequent session.

"The committee reported, that they have had a full, free and friendly conference with the deputies of the said churches, who, on behalf of the church in their several states, and by virtue of sufficient authority from them, have signified, that they do not object to the constitution, which was approved at the former session of this convention, if the third article of that constitution may be so modified, as to declare explicitly the right of the bishops, when sitting in a separate house, to originate and propose acts for the concurrence of the other house of convention; and to negative such acts proposed by the other house, as they may disapprove.

"Your committee, conceiving this alteration to be desirable in itself, as having a tendency to give greater stability to the constitution, without diminishing any security that is now possessed by the clergy or laity; and being sincerely impressed with the importance of an union to the future prosperity of the church, do therefore recommend to the convention a compliance with the wishes of their brethren, and that the third article of the constitution may be altered accordingly. Upon such alteration being made, it is declared by the deputies from the churches in the eastern states, that they will subscribe the con-

stitution, and become members of this general convention."

Upon special motion, the above report was read a second time; whereupon the following resolution was proposed, viz:—

Resolved, That this convention do adopt that part of the report of the committee, which proposes to modify the third article of the constitution, so as to declare explicitly "the right of the bishops, when sitting in a separate house, to originate and propose acts for the concurrence of the other house of convention; and to negative such acts proposed by the other house, as they may disapprove; provided they are not adhered to by four-fifths of the other house."

After some debate, the resolution, with the proviso annexed, was agreed upon, and the third article was accordingly modified in the manner following, viz:—

Art. 3d. *The bishops of this church, when there shall be three or more, shall, whenever general conventions are held, form a separate house, with a right to originate and propose acts for the concurrence of the house of deputies, composed of clergy and laity; and when any proposed act shall have passed the house of deputies, the same shall be transmitted to the house of bishops, who shall have a negative thereupon, unless adhered to by four-fifths of the other house; and all acts of the convention shall be authenticated by both houses. And, in all cases, the house of bishops shall signify to the convention their approbation or disapprobation, the latter, with their reasons in writ-*

ing, within three days after the proposed act shall have been reported to them for concurrence; and in failure thereof, it shall have the operation of a law. But until there shall be three or more bishops, as aforesaid, any bishop attending a general convention shall be a member, ex officio, and shall vote with the clerical deputies of the state to which he belongs; and a bishop shall then preside.

Acceptance by bishop Seabury, and the presbyters from New England.

October 2d, 1789.

We do hereby agree to the constitution of the church, as modified this day in convention.

Samuel Seabury, D. D. bishop of the episcopal church in Connecticut.

Abraham Jarvis, A. M. rector of Christ church, Middletown,
Bela Hubbard, A. M. rector of Trinity church, New Haven.
} State of Connecticut.

Samuel Parker, D. D. rector of Trinity church, Boston, and clerical deputy for Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Letters of consecration of bishop Seabury.

IN DEI NOMINE. Amen.

Omnibus ubique Catholicis per Presentes pateat,

Nos, Robertum Kilgour, miseratione divina, Episcopum Aberdonien—Arthurum Petrie, Episcopum Rossen et Moravien—et Joannem Skinner, Episcopum Coadjutorem; Mysteria Sacra Domini nostri

Jesu Christi in Oratorio supradicti Joannis Skinner apud Aberdoniam celebrantes, Divini Numinis Præsidio fretos (presentibus tam e Clero, quam e Populo testibus idoneis) Samuelem Seabury, Doctorem Divinitatis, sacro Presbyteratus ordine jam decoratum, ac nobis præ Vitæ integritate, Morum probitate et Orthodoxia, commendatum, et ad docendum et regendum aptum et idoneum, ad sacrum et sublimem Episcopatus Ordinem promovisse, et rite ac canonice, secundum Morem et Ritus Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ, consecrasse, Die Novembris decimo quarto, Anno Æræ Christianæ Millesimo Septingentesimo Octagesimo Quarto.——

In cujus Rei Testimonium, Instrumento huic (chirographis nostris prius, munito) Sigilla nostra apponi mandavimus.

Robertus Kilgour, Episcopus, et Primus. (L. S.)
Arthurus Petrie, Episcopus. (L. S.)
Joannes Skinner, Episcopus. (L. S.)

No. 21. p. 214.

A letter from the Rev. Dr. Coke, and the answer.

Right Rev. Sir,

Permit me to intrude a little on your time upon a subject of great importance.

You, I believe, are conscious that I was brought up in the church of England, and have been ordained a presbyter of that church. For many years I was prejudiced, even I think to bigotry in favour of it: but through a variety of causes or incidents, to mention which would be tedious and useless, my mind was ex-

ceedingly biased on the other side of the question. In consequence of this, I am not sure but I went farther in the separation of our church in America, than Mr. Wesley, from whom I had received my commission, did intend. He did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a right so to do, with Episcopal authority, but did not intend, I think, that an entire separation should take place. He, being pressed by our friends on this side of the water for ministers to administer the sacraments to them, (there being very few clergy of the church of England then in the states,) went farther, I am sure, than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed. And this I am certain of—that he is now sorry for the separation.

But what can be done for a re-union, which I much wish for; and to accomplish which Mr. Wesley, I have no doubt, would use his influence to the utmost? The affection of a very considerable number of the preachers and most of the people, is very strong towards him, notwithstanding the excessive ill usage he received from a few. My interest also is not small; and both his and mine would readily and to the utmost be used to accomplish that (to us) very desirable object; if a readiness were shown by the bishops of the protestant episcopal church to reunite.

It is even *to your church* an object of great importance. We have now above 60,000 adults in our society in these states, and about 250 travelling ministers and preachers; besides a great number of

local preachers, very far exceeding the number of travelling preachers; and some of those local preachers are men of very considerable abilities. But if we number the methodists as most people number the members of their church, viz. by the families which constantly attend the divine ordinances in their places of worship, they will make a larger body than you probably conceive. The society, I believe, may be safely multiplied by five on an average to give us our stated congregations; which will then amount to 300,000. And if the calculation which, I think, some eminent writers have made, be just, that three fifths of mankind are un-adult (if I may use the expression) at any given period, it will follow that all the families, the adults of which form our congregations in these states, amount to 750,000. About one fifth of these are blacks.

The work now extends in length from Boston to the south of Georgia; and in breadth from the Atlantic to lake Champlain, Vermont, Albany, Redstone, Holstein, Kentucky, Cumberland, &c.

But there are many hindrances in the way. Can they be removed?

1. Our ordained Ministers will not, ought not, to give up their right of administering the sacraments. I don't think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a re-ordination, if other hindrances were removed out of the way. I must here observe that between 60 and 70 only out of the two hundred and fifty have been ordained

presbyters, and about 60 deacons (only). The presbyters are the choicest of the whole.

2. The other preachers would hardly submit to a re-union, if the possibility of their rising up to ordination depended on the present bishops in America. Because though they are *all* I think I may say, zealous, pious and very useful men, yet they are not acquainted with the learned languages. Besides, they would argue,—If the present bishops would wave the article of the learned languages, yet their successors might not.

My desire of a re-union is so sincere and earnest that these difficulties almost make me tremble: and yet something must be done before the death of Mr. Wesley, otherwise I shall despair of success: for though my influence among the methodists in these states as well as in Europe is, I doubt not, increasing, yet Mr. Asbury, whose influence is very capital, will not easily comply: nay, I know he will be exceedingly averse to it.

In Europe, where some steps had been taken, tending to a separation, all is at an end. Mr. Wesley is a determined enemy of it, and I have lately borne an open and successful testimony against it.

Shall I be favoured with a private interview with you in Philadelphia? I shall be there, God willing, on Tuesday, the 17th. of May. If this be agreeable, I'll beg of you just to signify it in a note directed to me, at Mr. Jacob Baker's, merchant, Market street, Philadelphia: or, if you please, by a few lines sent me by the return of the post at Philip Rogers's, Esq.

in Baltimore, from yourself or Dr. Magaw, and I will wait upon you with my friend Dr. Magaw. We can then enlarge on these subjects.

I am conscious of it, that secrecy is of great importance in the present state of the business, till the minds of you, your brother bishops, and Mr. Wesley, be circumstantially known. I must therefore beg that these things be confined to yourself and Dr. Magaw, till I have the honour of seeing you.

Thus, you see, I have made a bold venture on your honour and candour, and have opened my whole heart to you on the subject as far as the extent of a small letter will allow me. If you put equal confidence in me, you will find me candid and faithful.

I have, notwithstanding, been guilty of inadvertencies. Very lately I found myself obliged (for the pacifying of my conscience) to write a penitential letter to the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, which gave him great satisfaction: and for the same reason I must write another to the Rev. Mr. Pettigrew. When I was last in America, I prepared and corrected a great variety of things for our magazines, indeed almost every thing that was printed, except some loose hints which I had taken of one of my journeys, and which I left in my hurry with Mr. Asbury, without any correction, intreating that no part of them might be printed which would be improper or offensive. But through great inadvertency (I suppose) he suffered some reflections on the characters of the two abovementioned gentlemen to be inserted in the magazine, for which I am very sorry: and probably shall not

rest till I have made my acknowledgment more public; though Mr. Jarratt does not desire it.

I am not sure whether I have not also offended you, Sir, by accepting of one of the offers made me by you and Dr. Magaw of the use of your churches about six years ago on my first visit to Philadelphia, without informing you of our plan of separation from the church of England. If I did offend, (as I doubt I did, especially from what you said on the subject to Mr. Richard Dellam, of Abington,) I sincerely beg yours and Dr. Magaw's pardon. I'll endeavour to amend. But, alas! I am a frail, weak creature.

I will intrude no longer at present. One thing only I will claim from your candor—that if you have no thoughts of improving this proposal, you will burn this letter, and take no more notice of it (for it would be a pity to have us entirely alienated from each other, if we cannot unite in the manner my ardent wishes desire.) But if you will further negotiate the business, I will explain my mind still more fully to you on the probabilities of success.

In the mean time permit me, with great respect, to subscribe myself,

Right Rev. sir,

Your very humble servant in Christ,

THOMAS COKE.

Richmond, April 24, 1791.

The Right Rev. Father in God, Bishop White.

You must excuse interlineations, &c. as I am just going into the country, and have no time to transcribe.

Answer.

Rev. Sir,

My friend, Dr. Magaw, has this day put into my hands, your letter of the 24th of April, which, I trust, I received with a sense of the importance of the subject and of the answer I am to give to God, for the improvement of every opportunity of building up his church. Accordingly, I cannot but make choice of the earliest of the two ways you point out to inform you, that I shall be very happy in the opportunity of conversing with you at the time proposed.

You mention two difficulties in the way of the proposed union. And there are further difficulties which suggest themselves to my mind. But I can say of the one and of the other, that I do not think them insuperable, provided there be a conciliatory disposition on both sides.—So far as I am concerned, I think that such a disposition exists.

It has not been my temper, Sir, to despond in regard to the extension of christianity in this new world: And in addition to the promises of the great head of the church, I have always imagined that I perceived the train of second causes so laid by the good Providence of God, as to be promoting what we believe to be his will in this repect. On the other hand, I feel the weight of most powerful discouragements, in the increasing number of the avowed patrons of infidelity, and of others, who pretend to confess the divine authority of our holy religion while they endeavour to strip it of its characteristic doctrines. In this situation, it is rather to be expected, that distinct churches, agreeing in fundamentals,

should make mutual sacrifices for a union, than that any church should divide into two bodies, without a difference being even alleged to exist, in any leading point. For the preventing of this, the measures which you may propose cannot fail of success, unless there be on one side, or on both, a most lamentable deficiency of christian temper.

I remember the conversation you allude to with Mr. Dellam: I hope I did not express myself uncharitably, or even indelicately. As to personal offence towards me, it is out of the question: for I had not at that time any connection with St. Paul's church—But this, as well as the other parts of your letter may be discoursed of at the proposed interview. Therefore, with assurance of the desired secrecy, and with requesting you to accept a like promise of candour to that which I credit from you, I conclude myself at present—

'Your Brother in Christ and very
Humble servant,
W. W.*

* The writer of the above answer kept silence on the subject of it, except in the permitted communication to the bishops, until the summer of 1804: when he received, in one day, two letters from the eastern shore of Maryland. One of them, was from the Rev. Simon Wilmer of the episcopal church, and the other was from the Rev. Mr. Mc Klaskey of the methodist communion. In a conversation between these two gentlemen, the former had affirmed the fact of Dr. Coke's application, which was disbelieved by the other. This produced their respective letters, which were answered by a statement of the fact. The matter being afterwards variously reported, a copy of the letter, was

No. 22. Page, 218.

Testimonial of the Rev. Charles Pettigrew.

We the subscribers having met in convention, at Tarborough, in North Carolina, on the 28th day of May, 1794, for the purpose of considering the declining situation of the protestant episcopal church in this state, and having chosen the Rev. Charles Pettigrew as a person fit to be our bishop, and worthy to be recommended for consecration to that holy office—but being sensible that the great distance at which the laity as well as the clergy of this state live from each other deprives us of sufficient personal acquaintance with one another to subscribe a testimonial in the words prescribed by the general convention of the protestant Episcopal church, have thought it necessary and proper to make some deviation therefrom, which we presume to hope will be no obstacle to our laudable pursuit. We therefore do hereby recommend to be consecrated to the office of a bishop, the said Reverend Charles Pettigrew, whom, from his morality, religious principles, piety of life, from his general reputation in a clerical character, from the personal knowledge we have of him, and from his sufficiency in good learning, and soundness in the faith, we are induced to believe worthy of being consecrated to that important office. We hereby promise and engage to *receive him* as such when canonically consecrated and invested therewith, and to render that canonical obedience

after some lapse of time, delivered to the Rev. Dr. Kemp of Maryland, and at last became published in a controversy raised in the diocess. W. W.

which we believe to be necessary to the due and proper discharge of so important a trust in the church of Christ. And we now address the Right Reverend the bishops in the several United States, praying their united assistance in consecrating this our said brother and canonically investing him with the apostolic office and powers. In testimony whereof, we hereunto subscribe our names, the day and year above written.

J. Leigh, M. D.
J. Guion, M. D.
R. Whyte, B. Woods, } Lawyers.
W. Clements,
L. Desseaux,
W. Grimes,
R. Godly, (of the laity.)

N. Blount,
J. L. Wilson,
J. Gurley,
S. Halling,
R. J. Miller,
(of the clergy)

No. 23 Page. 219.

Circular of a Committee in S. Carolina.

GENTLEMEN, *

Impressed with a fervent desire of being beneficial to the state in general, and of supporting religion among us, we the subscribers, being a select committee from several of the united episcopal churches in this state, who met on the 16th of last October, are

* In the document, some of the words are in larger characters than the rest. The same words are here given in italics with the view of making a faithful representation of the instrument: the framers of which were careful to give this explanation of their design; however beneath them an attention to the laws of grammar.

directed to address you. The subject is an important one, and requires consideration. From the proceedings of the two last general conventions, held at Philadelphia and New York, it has with regret been found by the representatives of this state, that the intention of all the eastern states was to form two separate houses of discussion on the forms and propagation of religion. To this all consented, not foreseeing any ill effects immediately arising from it. The one composed of bishops solely, the other of clergy and laity conjointly; and that a full consent of one house, together with *two thirds* of the other, must be obtained, to effectually carry any proposition into effect. But in these two last meetings as above, many proposed, that the house of bishops should have "*an absolute negative*" over the clergy and laity. To this Virginia and South Carolina were firmly opposed; theeastern states as firmly supported. The next general convention will be held at Philadelphia, where we wish to be represented, but upon the *same determination,* if approved by the vestries of our associated churches in this state, *of opposition to the absolute negative;* which, more than probably, will cause a *secession* of this state and Virginia from the general association. Considering the situation we shall then be left in, we are desirous, by the blessing of Almighty God directing us in our choice, to select one from the clergy of this state, to be sent forward immediately to the northward and to obtain authority solely to *ordain ministers* for this state, as well as to renew that ordinance

which has too long laid dormant in our country, *confirmation*. We have thought proper, therefore, to request your opinion on the subject, as we conceive from many of our rising young men having devoted themselves to the study of *divinity*, and by selecting some worthy and good man resident in a Parish, and desirous of taking the office of the ministry upon him, and having him ordained, we shall be better enabled to have our churches provided than we are at present by the clergy which we have of late experienced from Europe, or from our northern states; and as this country will then be their native country, and from being accustomed to reside in it, the complaints of its sickliness, which have been the great arguments of desertion from their parishes, will in some measure, if not totally, lose their effect: and as, in that case, the minister may have some property of his own, the subscription of parishes where small, will in this manner be rendered sufficiently ample; as well as the doctrines propagated consistent with the situation the Almighty has been pleased to allot us. We beg leave farther to mention, not with an intention to bias your opinion, but as a reason for our present application, that Virginia has pursued the steps marked out, and with the blessing of Heaven upon their endeavours and under the direction and guardianship of bishop *Madison*,* have obtained *sixty good and reputable divines*, men, if but of moderate learning, of sound and good morals,

* Who showed himself very indignant at the intended compliment.

who have undertaken the ministry, not from a desire of gain, but from a desire of doing good, and spreading the effects of piety, brotherly love, and charity in the several parishes where they reside. From these motives, and from the distressed situation we shall be in, if a secession takes place before we are provided with one to *confirm and ordain*, for then we must either take what they are pleased to send, or *humbly* intreat their favours to ordain for us, which might be refused after our secession, we have presumed to address you, hoping when these important concerns shall come before you, you will not refuse to lend us your aid, both in consulting in the most public manner the sentiments of our brethren at large, and informing us of them by a representative or representatives at our next state convention, to be held at St. Michaels church, on the 10th day of next February, for the express purpose of relinquishing or carrying the above measures into effect. And we have appointed this day *in particular* (anxiously desirous of being fully represented) as it is the day previous to the anniversary meeting of the revolution society to commemorate the birth day of general Washington, and conceiving many gentlemen may be in town upon so pleasing an occasion.

And we are gentlemen, with all respect and esteem,

Your humble servants.

No. 24. p. 229.

A letter from bishop Provoost.

"*New York, Sept.* 7, 1801.

"Right Rev. and dear Sir,

"I think it my duty to request, that, as President of the house of bishops, you will inform that venerable body, that, induced by ill health, and some melancholy occurrences in my family, and an ardent wish to retire from all public employment, I resigned, at the last meeting of our church convention, my jurisdiction as bishop of the protestant episcopal church in the state of New York.

I am, with great regard,
Dear and Right Rev. Sir,
Your affectionate brother,
SAMUEL PROVOOST.

Right Rev. Bishop White."

The house of bishops having considered the subject brought before them by the letter of bishop Provoost, and by the message from the house of clerical and lay deputies, touching the same, can see no grounds on which to believe, that the contemplated resignation is consistent with ecclesiastical order, or with the practice of episcopal churches in any ages, or with the tenor of the office of consecration. Accordingly, while they sympathize most tenderly with their brother bishop Provoost, on account of that ill health, and those melancholy occurrences which have led to the design in question, they judge it to be inconsistent with the sacred trust committed to them, to recognize the bishop's act as an effectual resigna-

tion of his episcopal jurisdiction. Nevertheless, being sensible of the present exigencies of the church of New York, and approving of their making provision for the actual discharge of the duties of the episcopacy, the bishops of this house are ready to consecrate to the office of bishop, any person who may be presented to them with the requisite testimonials from the general and state conventions; and of whose religious, moral, and literary character, due satisfaction may be given. But this house must be understood to be explicit in their declaration, that they shall consider such a person as assistant or co-adjutor bishop, during bishop Provoost's life, although competent in point of character to all the episcopal duties; the extent in which the same shall be discharged by him, to be dependent on such regulations as expediency may dictate to the church in New York, grounded on the indisposition of bishop Provoost, and with his concurrence.

No. 25.

Forms of Subscription.

Form in this church—"I do believe the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation. And I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the protestant episcopal church in these United States."

Form in the church of England—The 36th canon requires the candidates, after reference 1st, to the royal supremacy, 2nd, to the Book of Common Prayer with the ordinal, and 3rd, to the 39 articles,

to signify his assent as follows—"I. N. N. do willingly and ex animo subscribe to those three articles above mentioned, and to all things that are contained in them."

No. 26. p. 246

The house resumed the consideration of the matters brought before them by the Rev. Ammi Rogers, and came to the following determination concerning the same:

After full inquiry, and fair examination of all the evidence that could be procured, it appears to this house, that the said Ammi Rogers had produced to the standing committee of New York (upon the strength of which he obtained holy orders) a certificate, signed with the name of the Rev. Philo Perry, which certificate was not written nor signed by him.

That the conduct of the said Ammi Rogers in the state of Connecticut, during his residence in that state, since he left New York, has been insulting, refractory, and schismatical in the highest degree; and, were it tolerated, would prove subversive of all order and discipline in the church; and that the statement which he made in justification of his conduct, was a mere tissue of equivocation and evasion, and, of course, served rather to defeat than to establish his purpose.

Therefore, this house do approve of the proceedings of the church in Connecticut, in reproving the said Ammi Rogers, and prohibiting him from the performance of any ministerial duties within that diocess; and, moreover, are of opinion, that he de-

serves a severer ecclesiastical censure, that of degradation from the ministry.

In regard to the question, To what authority is Mr. Rogers amenable? this house are sensible, that there not having been previously to the present convention, any sufficient provision for a case of a clergyman removing from one diocess to another, it might easily happen, that different sentiments would arise as to this point. We are of opinion, that Mr. Rogers's residence being in Connecticut, it is to the authority of that diocess he is exclusively amenable. But as the imposition practised with a view to the ministry was in New York, we recommend to the bishop and standing committee of that state, to send to the bishop in Connecticut such documents, duly attested, of the measure referred to, as will be a ground of procedure in that particular.

We further direct the secretary, to deliver a copy of the above to the clerical deputies from Connecticut, and another copy to the Rev. Ammi Rogers. And we further direct, that either of the aforesaid parties be permitted to have any documents respectively delivered in by them, a copy of it being first taken; except the petition and affidavit of the Rev. Ammi Rogers, of which he may have a copy if desired, as may either of the parties have of any document delivered by the other party.

No. 27.

Of the Homilies.

The house of bishops, taking into consideration, that the two books of homilies are referred to in the

35th article of this church, as containing a body of sound christian doctrine; and knowing, by their respective experience, the scarcity of the volume, rendering it difficult for some candidates in the ministry to possess opportunities of studying its contents, propose to the house of clerical and lay deputies, to make it a standing instruction to every bishop, and to the ecclesiastical authority in every state destitute of a bishop, to be furnished (as soon as may be) with a copy or copies of said work, and to require it to be studied by all candidates for the ministry within their respective bounds: under the expectation, that when offering for ordination, the knowledge of its contents will be indispensibly required.

This was concurred in, by the house of clerical and lay deputies.

No. 28.

Concerning posture, during psalmody.

Whereas, a diversity of custom has of late years prevailed in the posture of ministers and of the people, during the act of singing the psalms and the hymns in metre; the former practice of sitting during this part of the service gradually giving way to the more comely posture of standing; it is hereby recommended by this convention, that it be considered as the duty of the ministers of this church, to encourage the use of the latter posture, and to induce the members of their congregations, as circumstances may permit, to do the same: allowance to be made for cases, in which it may be considered inconvenient by age, or by infirmity. Practice under this recom-

mendation, is to begin from the time when suitable information shall have been given by the clergy to their respective flocks. And, it shall be the duty of every minister, to give notice of this recommendation to his congregation, at such time, as in his discretion may be the most proper.

The carrying into effect of the contemplated change, may be delayed by the bishop of any diocess, or, where there is no bishop, by the ecclesiastical authority therein, until there shall have been time and opportunity of explaining satisfactorily the grounds of the measure.

No. 29.

Of a proposal of new anthems, and of sanction requested in favour of a proposed book.

The following proposition was submitted and agreed to, and communicated to the house of clerical and lay deputies.

The house of bishops communicate to the house of clerical and lay deputies, the following resolve, and the following rule of the house of bishops, to be entered on their journal after being returned by the house of clerical and lay deputies.

There was laid before the house, an address from the Rev. Dr. Wm. Smith, of Connecticut, together with sundry anthems selected from holy scripture, and adapted to certain fasts and feasts of the church. The object of the address, is to induce the establishment of the said anthems as parts of the liturgy.

Whereupon, *Resolved*, That it is not expedient during this convention, to go into a review, either in

whole or in part, of the book of Common Prayer. It could not, however, but give satisfaction to the bishops to recollect, that anthems taken from scripture, and judiciously arranged, may, according to the known allowance of this church, be sung in congregations at the discretion of their respective ministers. On this occasion, a question arose, how far it may be proper at any meeting of the convention, to give their sanction, or that of this house in particular, to any work, however tending to religious instruction, or to the excitement of pious affections. In reference to this subject, it is the unanimous opinion of the bishops present, that no such sanction should be given. And it is hereby made a rule of the house, that if any application should be made tending to such effect, it shall not be considered as regularly brought before them.

The above was returned by the house of clerical and lay deputies, with their respectful thanks, for what they were pleased to call the judicious course adopted by the bishops, in reference to the two subjects.

No. 30.

Concerning the identity of this church, with the former church of England, in America.

The following declaration was proposed and agreed to:

It having been credibly stated to the house of bishops, that on questions in reference to property devised before the revolution, to congregations be-

longing to "the church of England," and to uses connected with that name, some doubts have been entertained in regard to the identity of the body to which the two names have been applied, the house think it expedient to make the declaration, and to request the concurrence of the house of clerical and lay deputies therein—That "The protestant episcopal church in the United States of America" is the same body heretofore known in these states, by the name of "the church of England;" the change of name, although not of religious principle, in doctrine, or in worship, or in discipline, being induced by a characteristic of the church of England, supposing the independence of christian churches, under the different sovereignties, to which, respectively, their allegiance in civil concerns belongs. But that when the severance alluded to took place, and ever since, this church conceives of herself, as professing and acting on the principles of the church of England, is evident from the organization of our conventions, and from their subsequent proceedings, as recorded on the journals; to which, accordingly, this convention refers for satisfaction in the premises. But it would be contrary to fact, were any one to infer, that the discipline exercised in this church, or that any proceedings therein, are at all dependent on the will of the civil or of the ecclesiastical authority of any foreign country.

The above declaration having been communicated to the house of clerical and lay deputies, they returned for answer that they concurred therein.

No. 31.

From the Journal.

The house of bishops, solicitous for the preservation of the purity of the church, and the piety of its members, are induced to impress upon the clergy the important duty, with a discreet but earnest zeal, of warning the people of their respective cures, of the danger of an indulgence in those worldly pleasures which may tend to withdraw the affections from spiritual things. And especially on the subject of gaming, of amusements involving cruelty to the brute creation, and of theatrical representations, to which some peculiar circumstances have called their attention,—they do not hesitate to express their unanimous opinion, that these amusements, as well from their licentious tendency, as from the strong temptations to vice which they afford, ought not to be frequented. And the bishops cannot refrain from expressing their deep regret at the information, that in some of our large cities, so little respect is paid to the feelings of the members of the church, that theatrical representations are fixed for the evenings of her most solemn festivals.

From the Pastoral Letter.

Both to the clergy and to the laity we desire to say, but most pointedly to the former, that the christian profession exacts a greater abstraction from the world than that which consists in the abstaining from acknowledged sin. There are practices so nearly allied, and so easily abused to it, that we conceive of a professor of religion in duty bound either not to countenance them in the least degree; or, as is

allowable in regard to some of the matters contemplated, to avoid the so employing of time, and the so lavishing of affection, as puts into a state of sin, although not necessarily belonging to the subject. We would be far from an endeavour after an abridgment of christian liberty. But we cannot forget, that in a list of the classes of evil livers, there is introduced the description of persons who are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" nor, in respect to the female professors of religion in particular, the admonition, that "she who liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." We are aware of the difficulty of drawing the line between the use of the world and the abuse of it: that being conceived of by different persons equally pious and virtuous, according to the diversity of natural temperament, and of the states of society in which they have been placed by education or by habit: but we know, that where the conscience can reconcile itself to the drawing as near to the territory of sin, as it can persuade itself to be consistent with the still standing on secure ground, deadness to spiritual good at the best, but more commonly subjection to its opposite is the result.

In speaking of subjects of the above description, we would not be understood to class among them any practice which is either immoral in itself, or so customarily accompanied by immorality, that the one is necessarily countenanced with the other. Of the former description, is gaming in all the variety of its exercise: and the like may be said of whatever involves cruelty to the lower animals of the creation. If the same cannot be affirmed of works of fiction,

and of putting speeches into the mouths of feigned characters, for the purpose of instruction or of entertainment; yet as the question is applicable to the exhibitions of the theatre, such as they have been in every age, and are at present; we do not hesitate to declare unanimously our opinion, that it is a foul source of very extensive corruption. We lay little stress on the plea, that it is a matter practicable in social institutions, to purge the subject from the abuses which have been attached to it. When this shall have been accomplished, it will be time to take another ground. But, in truth, we are not persuaded of the possibility of the thing, when we consider that the prominent and most numerous patrons of the stage are always likely to be the least disposed to the seriousness which should enter into whatever is designed to discriminate between innocence and guilt. While the opinions and the passions of such persons shall continue to serve the purpose of a looking-glass, by which the exhibited characters are to be adjusted to the taste of so great a proportion of the public, we despair of seeing the stage rescued from the disgusting effusions of profaneness and obscenity; and much less of that mean of corruption, more insinuating than any other—the exhibiting of what is radically base, in alliance with properties captivating to the imagination.

While we address this alike to the clergy and to the laity, we consider it as especially hostile to the usefulness of the former. And even in regard to some matters confessed to be innocent in themselves,

their innocency may depend much on many circumstances, and of professional character among others. The ear of a clergyman should always be open to a call to the most serious duties of his station. Whatever may render it difficult to his own mind to recur to those duties with the solemnity which they require, or may induce an opinion in others, that such a recurrence must be unwelcome to him from some enjoyment not congenial with holy exercise, ought to be declined by him. If it be a sacrifice, the making of it is exacted by what ought to be his ruling wish, the serving of God, and the being useful to his fellowmen, in the discharge of the duties of the ministry.

No. 32. Page. 312.

Acts of the Convention of 1785.

A General Ecclesiastical Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the United States of America.

Whereas, in the course of Divine Providence, the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America is become independent of all foreign authority, civil and ecclesiastical:

And whereas, at a meeting of clerical and lay deputies of the said church in sundry of the said states, *viz.* in the states of Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, held in the city of New York, on the 6th and 7th days of October, in the year of our Lord 1784, it was recommended to this church in the said states represented as aforesaid, and proposed to this church in the states not

represented, that they should send deputies to a convention to be held in the city of Philadelphia, on the Tuesday before the feast of St. Michael in this present year, in order to unite in a constitution of ecclesiastical government, agreeably to certain fundamental principles, expressed in the said recommendation and proposal:

And whereas, in consequence of the said recommendation and proposal, clerical and lay deputies have been duly appointed from the said church in the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina:

The said deputies being now assembled, and taking into consideration the importance of maintaining uniformity in doctrine, discipline and worship in the said church, do hereby determine and declare,

1. That there shall be a general convention of the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America, which shall be held in the city of Philadelphia, on the third Tuesday in June, in the year of our Lord 1786, and for ever after, once in three years, on the third Tuesday of June, in such place as shall be determined by the convention; and special meetings may be held at such other times, and in such place, as shall be hereafter provided for, and this church, in a majority of the states aforesaid, shall be represented before they shall proceed to business; except that the representation of this church from two states, shall be sufficient to adjourn; and, in all business of the convention, freedom of debate shall be allowed.

2. There shall be a representation of both clergy and laity of the church in each state, which shall consist of one or more deputies, not exceeding four, of each order; and in all questions, the said church in each state shall have one vote; and a majority of suffrages shall be conclusive.

3. In the said church, in every state represented in this convention, there shall be a convention consisting of the clergy and lay deputies of the congregations.

4. "The book of Common Prayer, and administration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England," shall be continued to be used by this church, as the same is altered by this convention, in a certain instrument of writing, passed by their authority, entituled "Alterations of the liturgy of the protestant episcopal church, in the United States of America, in order to render the same conformable to the American revolution and the constitutions of the respective states."

5. In every state where there shall be a bishop duly consecrated and settled, and who shall have acceded to the articles of this general ecclesiastical constitution, he shall be considered as a member of the convention *ex officio.*

6. The bishop or bishops in every state, shall be chosen agreeably to such rules as shall be fixed by the respective conventions; and every bishop of this church, shall confine the exercise of his episcopal

office to his proper jurisdiction; unless requested to ordain or confirm by any church destitute of a bishop.

7. A protestant episcopal church in any of the United States not now represented, may at any time hereafter be admitted, on acceding to the articles of this union.

8. Every clergyman, whether bishop, presbyter or deacon, shall be amenable to the authority of the convention in the state to which he belongs, so far as relates to suspension or removal from office; and the convention in each state shall institute rules for their conduct, and an equitable mode of trial.

9. And whereas, it is represented to this convention, to be the desire of the protestant episcopal church in these states, that there may be further alterations of the liturgy, than such as are made necessary by the American revolution; therefore, the "book of Common Prayer, and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England," as altered by an instrument of writing, passed under the authority of this convention, entituled "Alterations in the book of Common Prayer, and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England, proposed and recommended to the protestant episcopal church in the United States of America," shall be used in this church, when the same shall have been ratified by the conventions which have respectively sent deputies to this general convention.

10. No person shall be ordained or permitted to officiate as a minister in this church, until he shall have subscribed the following declaration, "I do believe the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrines and worship of the protestant episcopal church, as settled and determined in the book of Common Prayer, and administration of the sacraments, set forth by the general convention of the protestant episcopal church in these United States."

11. This general ecclesiastical constitution, when ratified by the church in the different states, shall be considered as fundamental; and shall be unalterable by the convention of the church in any state.

Alterations agreed on and confirmed in convention, for rendering the liturgy conformable to the principles of the American Revolution, and the constitutions of the several states.

1st. That in the suffrages after the creed, instead of *O Lord, save the king*, be said *O Lord, bless and preserve these United States.*

2nd. That the prayer for the royal family, in the morning and evening service, be omitted.

3rd. That in the Litany the 15, 16, 17, and 18th. petitions, be omitted, and that instead of the 20 and 21st petitions, be substituted the following—*that it may please thee to endue the congress of these United States, and all others in authority, legislative, execu-*

tive, and judicial, with grace, wisdom and understanding, to execute justice and maintain truth.

4th. That when the litany is not said, the *prayer for the high court of* parliament be thus altered—"*Most gracious God, we humbly beseech thee, as for these United States in general, so especially for their delegates in congress, that thou wouldest be pleased to direct and prosper all their consultations to the advancement of thy glory, the good of thy church, the safety, honour and welfare of thy people, that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations,*" &c. to the end: and *the prayer for the king's majesty*, as follows: *viz.—O Lord, Our heavenly Father, the high and mighty Ruler of the universe, who dost from thy throne, behold all the dwellers upon earth; we most heartily beseech thee, with thy favour to behold all in authority, legislative, executive and judicial in these United States; and so replenish them with the grace of thy holy spirit, that they may alway incline to thy will and walk in thy way. Endue them plenteously with heavenly gifts, grant them in health and wealth long to live and, that after this life, they may attain everlasting joy and felicity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

5th. That the first collect for the king in the communion service be omitted; and that the 2nd be altered as follows—instead of "*the hearts of kings are in thy rules and governance*" be said—"*the hearts*

of all rulers are in thy governance; and instead of the words—"*heart of George thy servant,* insert—*so to direct the rulers of these states, &c.*" changing the singular pronouns to the plural.

7th. That in the answer in the Catechism to the question—"*What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?*" for "*to honour and obey the king*" be substituted—"*to honour and obey my civil rulers, to submit myself, &c.*"

8th. That instead of the observations of the 5th of November, the 30th of Jauuary, the 29th of May, and the 25th of October, the following service be used on the 4th of July, being the Anniversary of Independence.

9th. That in the forms of prayer to be used at sea, in the prayer "*O eternal God, &c.*" instead of those words—"*unto our most gracious sovereign Lord king George and his kingdoms,*" be inserted the words—"*the United States of America,*" and that instead of the word "*Island*" be inserted the word "*country;*" and that in the collect "*O Almighty God, the Sovereign Commander, &c.*" be omitted the words—"*the honour of our sovereign,*" and the words "*the honour of our country*" inserted.

Service for the 4th of July.

With the sentences before morning and evening prayer.

The Lord hath been mindful of us, and he shall bless us, he shall bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. O that men would therefore praise

the Lord, for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men.

Hymn, instead of the Venite.

My song shall be alway of the loving kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be showing his truth from one generation to another. *Psal.* 89. 1.

The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous works: that they ought to be had in remembrance. *Psal.* 111. 4.

Who can express the noble acts of the Lord: or show forth all his praise. *Psal.* 106. 2.

The works of the Lord are great: sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. *Psal.* 111. 2.

For he will not alway be chiding: neither keepeth he his anger for ever. *Psal.* 103. 9.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins: nor rewarded us according to our wickedness. *Verse* 10.

For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth: so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. *Verse* 11.

Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children: even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him. *Verse* 11.

Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried. *Psal.* 66. 9.

Thou didst remember us in our low estate, and redeem us from our enemies: for thy mercy endureth for ever. *Psal.* 136. 23, 24.

Proper Psalms, 118, except. V. 10, 11, 12, 13, 22, 23, to conclude with V. 24.

1. Lesson Deut. 8. 2. Lesson Thess. 5. V. 12, —23 both inclusive.

Collect for the day.

Almighty God, who hast in all ages showed forth thy power and mercy in the wonderful preservation of thy church, and in the protection of every nation and people professing thy holy and eternal truth, and putting their sure trust in thee; we yield thee our unfeigned thanks and praise for all thy public mercies, and more especially for that signal and wonderful manifestation of thy providence which we commemorate this day; wherefore not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be ascribed all honour and glory, in all churches of the Saints, from generation to generation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Thanksgiving for the day.

O God, whose Name is excellent in all the earth, and thy glory above the heavens; who as on this day didst inspire and direct the hearts of our delegates in Congress, to lay the perpetual foundations of peace, liberty, and safety; we bless and adore thy glorious Majesty, for this thy loving kindness and providence. And we humbly pray that the devout sense of this signal mercy may renew and increase in us a spirit of love and thankfulness to thee its only Author, a spirit of peaceable submission to the laws and government of our country, and a spirit of fervent zeal for our holy religion, which thou hast preserved and secured to us and our posterity. May we improve

these inestimable blessings for the advancement of religion, liberty, and science throughout this land, till the wilderness and solitary place be glad through us, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. This we beg through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.**

Alterations in the book of Common Prayer and administration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the church, according to the use of the church of England, proposed and recommended to the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States of America.

The order for morning and evening service, daily throughout the year.

1st. The following sentences of Scripture, are ordered to be prefixed to the usual sentences, viz.

The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him. *Hab.* ii. 20.

From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts. *Mal.* i. 11.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be alway acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. *Psal.* xix. 14.

* The Epistle and the gospel were added by the committee, agreeably to an authority which they conceived to be vested in them.

2d. That the rubric preceding the absolution, be altered thus—"*A declaration to be made by the Minister alone, standing, concerning the forgiveness of sins.*"

3d. That in the Lord's prayer, the word "*who*" be substituted in the room of "*which;*" and that "*those who trespass*" stand instead of "*them that trespass.*"

4. That the "*Gloria Patri*" be ommitted after the "*O come let us sing, &c.*" and in every other place, where, by the present rubric it is ordered to be inserted, to "the end of the" reading psalms; when, shall be said or sung "*Gloria Patri, &c.*" or, "*Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace and good will towards men, &c.*" at the discretion of the Minister.

5th. That in the "Te deum" instead of "*honourable*" it be "*adorable, true, and only son;*" and instead of "*didst not abhor the Virgin's womb,*" "*didst humble thyself to be born of a Virgin.*"

6th. That until a proper selection of psalms be made, each minister be allowed to use such as he may chuse.

7th. That the same liberty be allowed, respecting the lessons.

8th. That the article in "the Apostles creed" "*he descended into hell*" be omitted.

9th. That the *Athanasian* and the *Nicene* creeds be entirely omitted.

10th. That after the response "*and with thy spirit,*" all be omitted to the words "*O Lord show thy mercy upon us;*" which the *Minister shall pronounce, still kneeling.*

11th. That in the suffrage "*make thy chosen people joyful,*" the word "*chosen*" be omitted; and also the following suffrages, to "*O God, make clean our hearts within us.*"

12th. That the rubric after these words "*and take not thy holy spirit from us,*" be omitted. Then the two collects to be said: in the collect for grace, the words "*be ordered,*" to be omitted; and the word "*be*" inserted, instead of "*to do alway that is.*"

13th. In the collect "*for the clergy and people,*" read—"*Almighty and everlasting God, send down upon all bishops and other pastors, and the congregations committed to their charge, &c.*" to the end.

14th. (here is an erasure from the manuscript: the article being found a repetition of part of the 13th.)

15th. That the Lord's prayer after the litany, and the subsequent rubric be omitted.

16th. That the short litany be read as follows—"*Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us. Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace. O Christ, hear us. O Christ, hear us. Lord, have mercy upon us and deal not with us according to our sins, neither reward us according to our iniquities.*" After which, omit the words—"*let us pray.*"

17th. That the Gloria Patri, after *O Lord arise, &c.* be omitted; as also "*let us pray,*" after "*we put our trust in thee.*"

18th. That in the following prayer, instead of "*righteously have deserved,*" it be "*justly have deserved.*"

19th. That in the 1st. warning for the communion, the word "*damnation,*" following the words "*increase your*" be read "*condemnation;*" and the two paragraphs after these words—"*or else come not to that holy table,* be omitted; and the following one be read, *and if there be any of you, who by these means, cannot quiet their conscience, &c.* The words "*learned and discreet,*" epithets given to the Minister, to be also omitted.

20th. In the exhortation to the communion, let it run thus—"*for as the benefit is great, &c. to drink his blood, so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. Judge therefore yourselves, &c.*"

21st. That in the rubric preceding the absolution, instead of "*pronounce this absolution,*" it be—"*then shall the Minister stand up, and turning to the people, say, &c.*"

22d. That in the baptism of Infants, Parents may be admitted as sponsors.

23d. That the Minister, in speaking to the sponsors, instead of these words "*vouchsafe to release him, &c.*" say—"*release him from sin;*" and in the 2d prayer, instead of "*remission of his sins,*" read —"*remission of sin.*"

24th. That in the questions addressed to the sponsors, and the answers, instead of the present form, it be as follows—"*the sinful desires of the flesh.*"

25th. "*Dost thou believe the articles of the christian faith, as contained in the Apostles creed, and wilt thou endeavour to have this child instructed according-*

ty?" Answer: *I do believe them, and, by God's help will endeavour so to do."*

Wilt thou endeavour to have him brought up in the fear of God, and to obey God's holy will and commandments? Answer *"I will, by God's assistance."*

26th. That the sign of the cross may be omitted, if particularly desired by the Sponsors or Parents, and the prayer to be thus altered (by the direction of a short rubric) *"We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock; and pray that hereafter he may never be ashamed, &c."* to the end.

27. That the address—*"seeing now dearly beloved, &c."* be omitted.

28th. That the prayer after the Lord's prayer, be thus changed—*"we yield thee our hearty thanks, &c."* to *"receive this Infant as thine own child by baptism, and to incorporate him, &c."*

29th. That in the following exhortation, the words *"to renounce the devil and all his works,"* and in the charge to the Sponsors, the words *"vulgar tongue"* be omitted.

30th. That the forms of private baptism and confirmation, be made conformable to these alterations.

31st. That in the exhortation before matrimony, all between these words *"holy matrimony, and therefore if any man,* &c." be omitted.

32d. That the words *"I plight thee my troth"* be omitted in both places; and also the words—*"with my body I thee worship;"* and also—*"pledged their troth either to other."*

33d. That all after the blessing be omitted.

34th. In the burial service, instead of the two Psalms, take the following verses of both—viz. Psal. 39, V. 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, and Psal. 90, V. 13. In the rubric, the word "*unbaptized*" to be omitted.

In the declaration and forms of interment, beginning—"*forasmuch as, &c.*" insert the following —"*Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, in his wise Providence, to take out of this world the soul of our deceased brother (sister) we therefore commit his (her) body to the ground—earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; looking for the general resurrection in the last day and the life of the world to come through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming in glorious Majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in him shall be changed, and made like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.*

In the sentence "*I heard a voice,*" &c. insert "*who*" for "*which.*"

The prayer following the Lord's prayer to be omitted. In the next collect, leave out the words "*as our hope is, this our brother doth.*" For "*them that,*" insert "*those who.*"

35th. In the visitation of the sick, instead of the absolution as it now stands, insert the declaration of forgiveness which is appointed in the communion service; or, either of the collects which are taken from the commination office, and appropriated to Ash Wednesday, may be used.

In the psalm, omit the 3d, 6th, 8th, 9th, and 11th verses. In the commendatory prayer, for "*miserable and naughty,*" say "*vain and miserable.*" Strike out the word "*purged.*"

In the "*prayer for persons troubled in mind,*" omit all that stands between the words "*afflicted servant,*" and "*his soul is full,*" &c. and instead thereof say "*afflicted servant, whose soul is full of trouble,*" and strike out the particle "*but,*" and proceed, "*O merciful God,*" &c.

36. A form of prayer and visitation of prisoners for notorious crimes, and especially persons under sentence of death, being much wanted, the form entitled "prayers for persons under sentence of death, agreed on in the synod of the archbishops and bishops, and the rest of the clergy of Ireland, at Dublin, in the year 1711," as it now stands in the book of Common Prayer of the church of Ireland, is agreed upon, and ordered to be adopted, with the following alterations: viz:

For the absolution, take the same declaration of forgiveness, or either of the collects above directed for the visitation of the sick. The short collect "*O Saviour of the world,*" &c. to be left out; and for the word "*frailness,*" say "*frailty.*"

37. In the catechism, besides the alteration respecting civil rulers, alter as follows: viz. "*What is your name? N. M. When did you receive this name? I received it in baptism, whereby I became a member of the christian church. What was promised for you in baptism? That I should be instructed to believe the*

christian faith, as contained in the apostle's creed, and to obey God's holy will, and keep his commandments.

Dost thou think thou art bound to believe all the articles of the christian faith, as contained in the creed, and to obey God's holy will and keep his commandments? Yes verily," &c.

Instead of the words "*verily, and indeed taken,*" say—"*spiritually taken.*"

Answer to the question "*How many sacraments? Two, baptism and the Lord's supper.*"

38. Instead of a particular service for the churching of women, and psalms, the following special prayer is to be introduced, after the general thanksgiving: viz. This to be said, when any woman desires to return thanks. "*O Almighty God, we give thee most humble and hearty thanks, for that thou hast been graciously pleased to preserve this woman, thy servant, through the great pains and perils of childbirth. Incline her, we beseech thee, to show forth her thankfulness, for this thy great mercy, not only with her lips, but by a holy and virtuous life. Be pleased, O God, so to establish her health, that she may lead the remainder of her days to thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*"

39. The commination office for Ash Wednesday to be discontinued, and therefore the three collects, the first beginning—"*O Lord, we beseech thee,*"—2d, "*O most mighty God,*"—3d, "*Turn us, O good Lord,*" shall be continued among the occasional prayers; and used after the collect on Ash Wednes-

day, and on such other occasions as the minister shall think fit.

Articles of Religion.

1. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*

There is but one living, true, and eternal God, the Father Almighty; without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, wisdom and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible: and one Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, begotten of the father before all worlds, very and true God; who came down from heaven, took man's nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin of her substance, and was God and man in one person, whereof is one Christ; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice for the sins of all men; he arose again from death, ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he shall return to judge the world at the last day: and one holy spirit, the Lord and giver of life, of the same divine nature with the Father and the Son.

2. *Of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.*

Holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the holy scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New

Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church.

Of the names and numbers of the canonical Books.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, The 1 Book of Samuel, The 2 Book of Samuel, The 1 Book of Kings, The 2 book of Kings, The 1 Book of Chronicles, The 2 Book of Chronicles, The 1 Book of Esdras, The 2 Book of Esdras, The Book of Hester, The Book of Job, The Psalms, The Proverbs, Ecclesiastes or Preacher, Cantica or Songs of Solomon, 4 Prophets the greater, 12 Prophets the less.

And the other books (as *Hierome* saith) the church doth read for example of life, and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine; such are these following:

The 3 Book of Esdras, The 4 Book of Esdras, The Book of Tobias, The Book of Judith, The rest of the Book of Hester, The Book of Wisdom, Jesus the Son of Sirach, Baruch the Prophet, The Song of the three Children, The Story of Susanna, Of Bell and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, The 1 Book of Maccabees, The 2 Book of Maccabees.

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

3. *Of the Old and New Testament.*

There is a perfect harmony and agreement between the Old Testament and the New; for in both, everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who

is the only mediator between God and man: and although the law given by Moses, as to ceremonies and the civil precepts of it, doth not bind christians; yet all such are obliged to observe the moral commandments which he delivered.

4. *Of the Creed.*

The creed, commonly called the *Apostles* creed, ought to be received and believed: because it may be proved by the holy scripture.

5. *Of Original Sin.*

By the fall of Adam, the nature of man is become greatly corrupted, having departed from its primitive innocence, and that original righteousness in which it was at first created by God. For we are now so inclined naturally to do evil, that the flesh is continually striving to act contrary to the spirit of God: which corrupt inclination still remains even in the regenerate. But although there is no man living who sinneth not, yet we must use our sincere endeavours to keep the whole law of God, so far as we possibly can.

6. *Of Free-will.*

The condition of man, after the fall of *Adam*, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ giving a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

7. *Of the Justification of Man.*

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith; and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

8. *Of Good Works.*

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.

9. *Of Christ alone without Sin.*

Christ, by taking human nature on him, was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted. He was a lamb without spot, and by the sacrifice of himself once offered, made atonement and propitiation for the sins of the world; and sin was not in him. But all mankind besides, although baptized and born again in Christ, do offend in many things. For if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

10. *Of Sin after Baptism.*

They who fall into sin after baptism may be renewed by repentance: for although after we have received God's grace, we may depart from it by falling into sin; yet, through the assistance of his holy spirit,

we may by repentance and the amendment of our lives, be restored again to his favour. God will not deny forgiveness of sins to those who truly repent, and do that which is lawful and right; but all such through his mercy in Christ Jesus, shall save their souls alive.

11. *Of Predestination.*

Predestination to life, with respect to every man's salvation, is the everlasting purpose of God, secret to us: and the right knowledge of what is revealed concerning it, is full of comfort to such truly religious christians, as feel in themselves the spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of their flesh and earthly affections, and raising their minds to heavenly things. But we must receive God's promises as they are generally declared in holy scripture, and do his will, as therein is expressly directed: for without holiness of life no man shall be saved.

12. *Of Obtaining eternal Salvation only by the name of Christ.*

They are to be accounted presumptuous, who say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For holy scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.

13. *Of the Church and its Authority.*

The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, wherein the true word of God is preach-

ed and the sacraments are duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance in all things requisite and necessary: and every church hath power to ordain, change, and abolish rites and ceremonies, for the more decent order and good government thereof; so that all things be done to edifying. But it is not lawful for the church to ordain any thing contrary to God's word, nor so to expound the scripture, as to make one part seem repugnant to another; nor to decree or enforce any thing to be believed as necessary to salvation, that is not contained in the scriptures. General councils and churches are liable to err, and have erred, even in matters of faith and doctrine, as well as in their ceremonies.

14. *Of Ministering in the Congregation.*

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, who are chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

15. *Of the Sacraments*

Sacraments ordained by Christ are not merely badges or tokens of christian men's profession; but rather certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, baptism, and the supper of the Lord.

16. *Of Baptism.*

Baptism is not merely a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby christian men are discerned from others that are not christened; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they who receive baptism rightly are grafted into the church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church, as most agreeable to the institution of Christ.

17. *Of the Lord's Supper.*

The supper of the Lord is not merely a sign of the love that christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break, is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing, is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy writ: but is repugnant to the plain words of scripture, overthroweth the nature

of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper of the Lord, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith.

18. *Of the one oblation of Christ upon the cross.*

The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual: and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone.

19. *Of Consecration and Ordination.*

The book of consecration of bishops and ordering of priests and deacons, excepting such parts as require any oaths inconsistent with the American revolution, is to be adopted, as containing all things necessary to such consecration and ordering.

20. *Of a Christian Man's Oath.*

The christian religion doth not prohibit any man from taking an oath, when required by the magistrate in testimony of truth; but all vain and rash swearing is forbidden by the holy scriptures.

Ordered, that the plan for obtaining consecration, be again read: which being done, the same was agreed to, and is as follows:

[The plan follows in the instrument, but is here omitted, because given in No. 5. p. 353.]

Done in Philadelphia, Christ church, in convention of the clerical and lay deputies of the protestant episcopal church in the states under-mentioned, this 5th day of October, 1785. (Signed by the president, and all the members of the convention, ranged according to their respective states: as was also the address to the English prelates, published in the journal of 1786.)

Extracts from the Journal.

Resolved, That the liturgy shall be used in this church as accommodated to the revolution, agreeably to the alterations now approved of and ratified by this convention.

On motion, *Resolved,* That the fourth of July shall be observed by this church for ever, as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the inestimable blessings of religious and civil liberty vouchsafed to the United States of America.

On motion, *Resolved,* That the first Thursday in November in every year for ever, shall be observed by this church as a day of general thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the fruits of the earth, and for all the other blessings of his merciful providence.*

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to publish the book of Common Prayer with the alterations, as well as those now ratified, in order to render the liturgy consistent with the American revolution, and the constitutions of the respective states, as the alterations and new offices recommended to this

* The preparing of a suitable service, was left to the committee.

church; and that the book be accompanied with a proper preface or address, setting forth the reason and expediency of the alterations; and that the committee have the liberty to make verbal and grammatical corrections; but in such manner, as that nothing in form or substance be altered.

The committee appointed were the Rev. Dr. White, (President) the Rev. Dr. Smith, and the Rev. Dr. Wharton.

Ordered, That the said committee be authorised to dispose of the copies of the Common Prayer when printed; and that after defraying all expenses incurred therein, they remit the nett profits to the treasurers of the several corporations and societies for the relief of the widows and children of deceased clergymen in the states represented in this convention; the profits to be equally divided among the said societies and corporations.

Resolved, That the same committee be authorised to publish, with the book of Common Prayer, such of the reading and singing psalms, and such a kalendar of proper lessons for the different Sundays and holydays throughout the year, as they may think proper.

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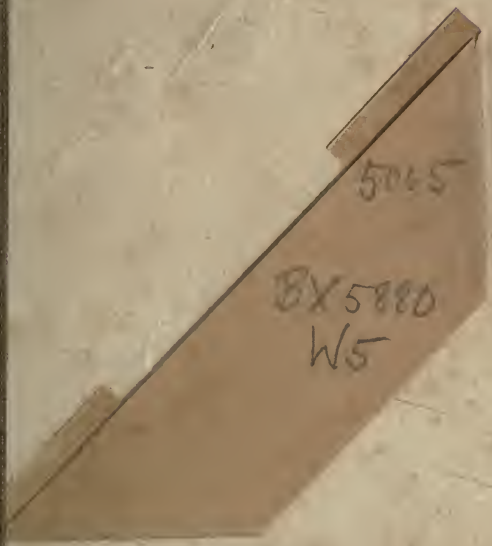
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